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ABSTRACT

Descriptive data about mature, full-time students enrolled in three postsecondary nonuniversity institutes in Saskatchewan, Canada, were gathered. Information was sought about the personal characteristics of these students, about the decision making process they followed when deciding to return to school, and about the difficulties and benefits they encountered upon their return. The 218 respondents were 25 years old and over and were enrolled in one-year and two-year programs. Responses to the questionnaire, which is appended, indicated that there was no single typical profile for the mature student enrolled in these institutes. There were more females than males in the population, they tended to 25 to 29 years old, and were most likely to be enrolled in health science programs. Nearly half the respondents were married and/or had financial dependents. Respondents indicated that the three main reasons for their interval away from school were that they had completed the schooling desired at that time, that they wanted to go to work, or that they were being married or planning marriage. Most commonly mentioned reasons for returning to school were for personal satisfaction, to develop new skills, to get a better job or promotion, and to change careers. More financial assistance was indicated to be the most needed change to facilitate the return of mature full-time students. Differences according to sex, age, and program groupings are described. A literature review, information on the research methodology, and references are included. (SW)

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ED196390

AN EXAMINATION OF FULL-TIME MATURE STUDENTS
IN ONE AND TWO-YEAR PROGRAMS
AT SASKATCHEWAN POST-SECONDARY INSTITUTES

A Thesis
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
For the Degree of
Master of Continuing Education
in the
Department of Continuing Education
University of Saskatchewan

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ABSTRACT

Over the past years, information collected on post-secondary student populations has indicated that substantial numbers are mature students who are re-entering the education system. Little is known about these students except the statistics which show that they exist.

The objective of the present study was to gather descriptive data about mature, full-time students enrolled in the three post-secondary, non-university Saskatchewan institutes. These data were collected to provide information about the personal characteristics of these students, about the decision-making process they followed when deciding to return to school, and about the difficulties and benefits they encountered upon their return.

The population for this study was mature, full-time students (aged 25 years and over) who were enrolled in one and two-year programs in Saskatchewan institutes. A questionnaire was administered to this population with a 94% response obtained (N=218). A copy of the questionnaire is included in this thesis as Appendix B.

The data showed that there was no single typical profile for the mature student enrolled in these institutes. There were more females than males in the population, they tended to be aged 25-29 years, and were most likely to be enrolled in health science programs. Nearly half the respondents were married and/or had financial dependents. The median income range of their last paid job was $7,500-$10,000 per year.

Respondents indicated that the three main reasons for their interval away from school were that they had completed the schooling desired at that time, that they had wanted to go to work, or that they were being married or planning marriage. Women were much more likely to have indicated this last reason.

Most respondents had planned their return to school for 1-5 years and other people had been important in the decision to return to school. Most commonly mentioned reasons for returning to school were for personal satisfaction, to develop new skills, to get a better job or promotion, and to change careers.

Respondents indicated, on average, 4.4 difficulties which they had encountered since returning to school, with the main difficulty being lack of money. On average, 7.8 benefits of returning to school were indicated by each respondent. The main benefit indicated was involvement in something worthwhile.

More financial assistance was indicated to be the most needed change to facilitate the return of mature full-time students.

Differences according to sex, age, and program groupings are described in the thesis. Written comments which were representative of those made by 48% of the respondents at the end of the questionnaire are included in the thesis.

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CHAPTER 1

NATURE AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

Substantial numbers of students enrolling in non-university, post-secondary institutions in Canada are older students who are re-entering the educational system after an absence from that system for a variety of reasons. Data from seven reporting provinces to Statistics Canada (1978) show that in 1976, 11.6% of all full-time students in such institutions were age 25 years or over (p. 30).

Saskatchewan has three post-secondary, non-university institutes; the Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw, the Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences in Saskatoon, and the Regina-based Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences. The 1976-77 Annual Report of the Saskatchewan Department of Continuing Education (1978a) stated:

> The institutes provide programs which lead directly to employment in business, industry or government. Program selection and development respond to identified post-secondary education needs of the people of the province, provincial manpower requirements and occupational trends. (p. 7)

Government of Saskatchewan records in the Department of Continuing Education show that in the academic year of 1977-78 there were 399 institute students enrolled in the one and two-year programs who were aged 25 years or over. This was 12.2% of the total full-time student enrolment in those programs (Department of Continuing Education, (1978b).

Other provincial data, as recorded by Statistics Canada (1978a) shows that in 1976, 16.2% of full-time students in Manitoba post-secondary, non-university institutions were 25 years of age and older. The figures indicate that 18.3% of post-secondary, non-university students fell in this age range in Alberta. Ontario's Ministry of Colleges and Universities (1978) records that, in 1977, 10.06% of full-time post-secondary students in community colleges in that province were aged 25 years or over.

Aside from this sparse statistical information, little research has been done to describe this group of mature re-entry students. Information on educational and employment background, personal data, or family situation has not been examined nor related to the reasons these students return to school, the decision-making process that was followed, the expectations they hold, and the difficulties and benefits they encounter as they re-enter the educational system.

Examination of mature re-entry students in North America focuses primarily on re-entry women, on the mature student in the university setting (or a combination of both), and on part-time mature students.

Studies relating to the mature student in technical institutes in Saskatchewan are confined to the examination of a specific small sector of this population. Belak (1972) examined the single parent women in one such institute, and Howe (1978) examined the mature student enrolling in health science programs as one aspect of her attempt to determine predictors of student adjustment.

Authors who point to the increasing numbers of mature students in post-secondary institutions, speculate as to the reasons they have returned to school, and warn that the needs of these students are not known nor considered in educational programming or planning. For example, Thomas (1966) stated:

> Almost by definition, the adult student is a person attempting to carry out his education in the hands of an institution in the main purpose of which is the education of someone else. It is an institution which, by and large, has made only tentative adjustments to the fact that adults do not become less adult simply because they become students. Despite other more popular and dramatic preoccupations, this is the real educational crisis of the times. (p. 318)

Research questions which will be the central focus of this study will include questions which ask who these mature full-time students are, what their reasons for returning to school are, how the decision was made, and how they assess the difficulties and benefits of being full-time mature students.

1.2 Statement of the problem

The purpose of this study is to accumulate accurate descriptive data that will provide needed information about the mature re-entry student population in the post-secondary, non-university institutes in Saskatchewan.

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. To gather data on the mature re-entry full-time student enrolled in one or two-year programs at the three Saskatchewan post-secondary, non-university institutes. These data will be used to describe:

(a) Personal characteristics of the respondents (such as age, sex, marital status, previous work experience, educational background).

(b) Why the respondents decided to return to the formal education system.

(c) How the decision to return to the formal education system was reached.

(d) The major difficulties in returning to school.

(e) The major benefits in returning to school.

(f) If difficulties and benefits in returning to school were as anticipated by respondent before re-entry.

(g) What would make it easier for adults to return to school.

2. To determine if there are any differences in the above factors when comparisons are made between male and female respondents, among age groups within the population, between respondents in one and two-year programs, and among respondents in programs grouped by designated divisions.

3. To determine if there is a typical profile or profiles for mature re-entry students in post-secondary, non-university institutes in Saskatchewan.

4. To discuss the implications of these findings for planning in post-secondary institutes in Saskatchewan.

1.3 Limitations of the study

This study is descriptive in nature and will be limited to an examination of mature re-entry students who are enrolled full-time in one and two-year programs in post-secondary, non-university institutions in Saskatchewan.

One and two-year programs (certificate and diploma) which are included in this study are grouped into five major divisions which are entitled Applied Science and Engineering Technology, Health Sciences, Service Occupations, Administration and Business, and Trades and Pre-Employment Programs. These divisional groupings are as determined by the Saskatchewan Department of Continuing Education. A complete list of the individual programs and their length can be found in Appendix H of this thesis.

1.4 Definitions of terms

A mature student is defined as a student 25 years of age or older at the time of the study (January, 1979).

A re-entry student is defined as a student who has re-entered the formalized education system after an absence of one year or more from it, and who has enrolled as a full-time student in a one or two-year program in a Saskatchewan post-secondary, non-university institute.

A sequential student is defined as a student who has not been absent from the regular education system for one year or more.

An institute is defined as a non-university, post-secondary educational institution in Saskatchewan. There are three such institutes in the province; Kelsey Institute of Applied Arts and Science in Saskatoon, Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Science in Regina, and the Saskatchewan Technical Institute in Moose Jaw. When references are made to literature pertaining to community colleges, junior colleges, two-year colleges or technical schools, the author will have assessed these other institutions to be similar to Saskatchewan institutes unless indicated otherwise.

A one-year program is defined as any institute program of 35 or more weeks duration in one academic year.

A two-year program is defined as any institute program with a duration of 35 weeks or more in each of two academic years.

The term "non-sequential" will be avoided because of its poor definition at present within this province. As currently used, the term indicates a student who has been absent from the education system for a period of time between completion of high school and entering a post-secondary program. However, it does not include the mature student who was absent from the system for a period of time before completing his or her secondary education.

1.5 Need for the study

Information on this group of students is important for future planning regarding counselling services to mature students, and for determining changes needed to alleviate specific problems of the mature student. There is some awareness that planning cannot be done until more information is available. J.A. Riffel (1976), speaking to the delegates at a seminar entitled "Assessing Demands for Post-Secondary Education in Western Canada", spoke of his concern regarding the data base being used for forecasting this demand. He stated:

> There is not adequate information available on "non-sequential", "non-traditional", and "step-out" students. Present data bases and forecasting procedures are best suited to dealing with "sequential" students. (p. 5)

Riffel also reports that during the seminar, frequent reference was made to the changing patterns of participation in post-secondary education. He observed:

> There seems to be a growing number of non-sequential students and "step-outs": many people seem now to regard education and employment as alternatives, not one as a prelude to another. If these new patterns continue to grow in magnitude they will have profound implications for post-secondary education and its planning. Most planning and demand assessments appear to follow a sequential model which makes education a prelude to employment. Alternative or complementary models will be required in order to deal effectively with changing patterns of participation. (p. 11)

As well as being useful in planning and assessing demands, information on this group of students will be of use in a variety of other ways. The Department of Continuing Education and the three institutes will be better able to understand the needs of this group of students. Counsellors and instructors will be more fully aware of the difficulties and benefits experienced by the older students and can use this information in counselling and teaching situations. Perspective students can also make use of this study by examining the responses and relating them to their personal situation as they consider enrolling as full-time mature students.

CHAPTER 2

SURVEY OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In order to ascertain the existing literature relating to the mature re-entry student, a search was conducted of a variety of sources. A computerized search of Eric Resources Information Centre (ERIC), and The Centre for Vocational Education, Ohio State University (AIM/ARM) data base was conducted. Libraries at the University of Saskatchewan, the University of Regina, and the Public Libraries in Saskatoon and Regina were searched for relevant material. The author also visited the library at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education. Further references were discovered as a result of conversations with officials in the Saskatchewan and Ontario Education Departments and with faculty at the University of Saskatchewan and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Difficulties arose in categorizing the literature which was found, as there are many interrelationships found in the material covered. However, it was decided to classify the material as follows in an attempt to make it meaningful.

2.2 Literature relating to students in secondary schools

There exists a large volume of literature relating to the career and educational intentions, the motivations and the decision-making process of sequential students in the latter stages of secondary school. This literature was examined in order to discover the similarities and differences between this group of younger students and the mature students of this research.

Major (1973) attempted a profile of Grade 12 students in Manitoba schools (N = 3453). He found that 46.9% of the students planned to enter post-secondary education following completion of high school, 12.3% intended to discontinue schooling and work full-time, and 39.8% had "other plans" ranging from getting part-time employment to joining the armed forces. One-third of those with "other plans" intended on enrolling in post-secondary institutions at a later date. Of the total, 24.2% listed community colleges as their first choice for post-secondary education (pp. 23-26).

The students indicated their decisions were influenced primarily by parents, followed by friends, high school graduates, counsellors, employers and teachers (p. 43). A high correlation was found between students' decisions and parents' level of education. Students planning to continue school identified parental aid as their leading source of financial assistance (p. 59). Students in urban areas were more likely to enter post-secondary institutions than those in rural areas (p. 64).

Major noted that his research indicated that the students had very limited knowledge about the range of programs available and even less understanding about the career possibilities connected with them (p. 26).

Anisef (1973) conducted a study of Grade 12 students in Ontario (N = 2951) which examined their decisions regarding future career and education. He found 28.9% intended to enter university after completing high school, 20% planned to attend Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology, and 20% indicated their intention to take full-time employment (p. 3).

He found that those who intended to go to colleges were typically female, from both urban and rural settings, had a father with a low prestige occupation, and had a lower Grade 11 mark average than did the university aspirants (p. 14). Anisef found that students intending to go to university arrived at their decision very early (50% had decided this by Grade 8), while students going to colleges decided later in their high school career. Both groups of students planned to rely on parental assistance for financial help, with more college students than university students depending also on personal savings and summer employment (pp. 9-10).

Anisef concluded that adolescents' educational and vocational plans are based not on arbitrary decisions but depend, to a large extent, on social origin, place of residence, experience, and performance in high school (p. 13).

A further study by Anisef (1975), examining the realization of the intentions of Grade 12 students, showed that 40% of the population had altered their original plans. By autumn 1974, 40% were working full-time, but only 20% had indicated intentions of entering the work force when questioned in spring, 1973. Only 14% had enrolled in colleges, although 22% had indicated an intention to do so (p. 5). Of those enrolled in colleges, 60% were female, whereas universities and full-time work attracted equal numbers of males and females. Anisef asked the students who were enrolled at universities and colleges to identify major pressures facing them when completing their studies. Of the respondents, 40% indicated they had encountered no major pressures. Only 4.6% indicated financial problems as a major difficulty (p. 11).

Wennevold (1975) conducted a study on British Columbia Grade 12 students (N = 9325). He categorized the responding students into four groups regarding their intentions for continuing their education. One group indicated they were not going on in their formal education, a second group was "maybe", a third group was planning to attend college, vocational or technical institutions, and the fourth group intended to go to university. He found that 34.8% indicated an intention to continue their schooling and over half of these (18.5% of total) were planning on college, vocational or technical institutions (p. 21). A profile of the "college intending" students showed their financial sources to be primarily personal savings and financial aid from parents and family (p. 32). Their decision to attend post-secondary schools was influenced primarily by parents and friends (p. 45). He found that both male and female students tended to choose the traditional sex-stereotyped occupations, and their aspirations were affected by parents' education level (male students were more correlated with the father's education level and females with the mother's (pp. 53-57). In metropolitan areas of British Columbia he found students were more likely to enroll for university, whereas nonmetropolitan students were more likely to go to college, vocational or technical schools (p. 60).

In Wennevold's study the students who were not intending to continue their schooling indicated that their main reasons for this decision were that they wanted to make money and to broaden their experience of life before continuing their education (p. 39). The leading factors influencing the students who were planning on college were the reputation of the chosen institution and the possibility of a new life style (p. 8).

A recent American study (Bishop, 1977) states that public policies such as tuition level and admissions selectivity influence decisions made early in high school as to whether an academic curriculum is chosen, how much time is devoted to study and how much parents encourage college as a goal. These decisions, in turn, affect the students' grades in high school and performance on achievement tests, and therefore their admissibility to various types of colleges.

2.3 Literature relating to part-time students

Much of the literature describing the mature student relates to the part-time learner. It was examined to determine what characteristics or profiles were evident among that population.

Martin (1978-79) states that one-third of all college students in the United States are 25 years of age or older, and that more than 50% of all college students attend part-time (p. 42).

Curry and Johnson (1978) examined enrolments in Washington State community colleges from 1973 to 1977. They found enrolment increases were primarily due to the increasing number of part-time students. The total number of students under 30 increased by 5% but the number over 30 increased by 15%, accounting for 38% of total enrolment (Table 8, p. 21). Students who entered directly from high school declined, whereas all other entrances increased.

Daly's research (1977) also showed an overall decline of full-time students from 1976 to 1977 and an increase in part-time. The average age of all students was 27.8 years, with 46% being over 25 years of age (p. 3). Both Daly and the Curry-Johnson research showed increasing numbers of women enrolling in the colleges. The women tend to be under 19 years of age or over 25 years.

Ebersole (1976) compared the student population of a Pennsylvania community college from 1964 and 1975 information. He found the 1975 student to be older, more likely to be female and more likely to be a part-time student when compared to the typical 1964 student (p. 93).

Carp, Peterson and Roelfs (1974) did a major American survey (N = 2974) to determine adult learning interests and experiences. They divided their respondents into "learner" and "non-learner" categories. No full-time students were included in the analysis.

Both learners and non-learners indicated knowledge goals (to be better informed, to satisfy curiosity) and personal goals (to get a job, advancement) were the first and second most important reasons they were participating in or planning a learning experience. Both groups ranked personal fulfillment (to be a better person, happier) as third most important reason (p. 41). Among the learners, they found men gave more job-related responses and women more for personal fulfillment.

Carp et al. found that would-be learners indicated the greatest barrier to participation in learning was cost (including books, child care, transportation and tuition) which was mentioned by 53% of this group. The other barriers listed most frequently were "not enough time" (46%), "don't want to go to school full time" (35%), and home responsibilities (32%). Most of those indicating time barriers and home responsibilities were middle-aged (p. 46).

A Canadian study similar to Carp et al. was conducted by Waniewicz (1976) in Ontario, where he examined the demand for part-time learning in Ontario. He found the majority of learners were single, young, professional and white collar workers, mother tongue English, urban, with incomes over $20,000.00 (p. 173). The "would-be learners" were profiled as women aged 18-34 years and 45-49 years, people with children at home, with uncompleted secondary education, homemakers, part-time employed, clerical workers, low incomes (below $7,500.00), and people in less than urban areas (p. 174).

Waniewicz examined barriers to learning (chap. 9) and concluded that the barriers which should concern educational planners are those related to financial problems, mobility and adaptability to existing opportunities (p. 179).

He states:

> formal educational institutions seem to cater more to the needs of younger people. The gap in educational opportunities for older people becomes more evident if we take into account the fact that their major interest is vocational education. (p. 175)

Roelf (1975) concluded that there may be a need for specialized counselling expertise within colleges to help adult learners deal with problems of combining college, work and family life (p. 3). She examined students' preferences in instructional style and found that older students preferred traditional instructor-centered styles. Only 20% of 18 - 21 year old students preferred instructor-centered styles, whereas 27% of 22 - 29 year olds and 42% of those over 30 indicated a preference for this style (p. 4).

2.4 Literature relating to full-time mature students

Examination of literature on full-time mature students provides some interesting information.

Fourteen years ago, Blocker et al. (1965) felt confident enough about their observations of the mature student in two-year colleges to state:

> Maturity of older students is reflected in their seriousness of purpose and specificity of behavior, both personal and academic. They view the college as a stepping stone to the realization of their long-range personal and vocational goals. Generally, they have little or no interest in extracurricular activities, athletics and other nonclassroom activities. Their interests are focused upon the completion of college courses required for graduation or to achieve some specific vocational goal. (p. 108)

However, O'Connell (1968) stated that, "Community college students are such a varied group that few generalities about them are useful... including the description of 'terribly serious older students, both men and women'" (p. 54).

Margrain (1978) supports O'Connell's observation by stating that attempts to construct a profile of the successful student over a wide range of background characteristics have proven largely disappointing. She does point to research that has shown that re-admitted students earned higher grades than they had before their withdrawal from education. Students who had withdrawn for reasons of church mission or to be a housewife performed better than those who withdrew for reasons of employment or military service. The length of time a student was out of school made no difference in academic performance (p. 117).

Bushnell (1973) reported on an American national study of community colleges (PROJECT FOCUS) which was funded by the Kellogg Foundation. The study found that, overall, full-time students at community and junior colleges were older than their four-year college peers (p. 19).

Respondents indicated that the older the students, the more likely it is that they will find the college experience satisfying. Bushnell concluded that the longer students have to wait to obtain a college education, the higher a value they place on it.

Preston (1975) studied full-time day students in a California community college. He found that the older students, particularly the women, were more traditional in their attitudes toward the educational system than were the younger students (p. 113). His finding agreed with those of Roelf (1975) that adult students have a desire for a more structured, directive and instructor-centered environment (p. 4).

Garbin and Vaughn (1971) conducted a national survey of 5,000 students in vocational-technical programs at 60 public community and junior colleges in the United States. They found that one-third of all students who entered two-year colleges were enrolled in day occupational, vocational and technical programs (p. 26). Of the total student population, 15.7% were aged 24 years or older, with the largest portion of this older group (35.5%) enrolled in health occupations. They found there was a definite tendancy for a greater portion of these older respondents to have more favorable self-definitions than the younger respondents (58.5% of the older group had high self-esteem compared to 49.6% of the 18 year olds) (p. 60).

The data showed that 46.5% of the students did not come directly to college from high school. The authors state:

> A paucity of data exist on the period between high school and college. In particular, there is a noticeable absence of information on the principal activity of future college students who do not begin their higher education during the first academic year following high school. (p. 115)

Perrone and Davis (1976) conducted a survey of 650 students, ranging in age from 21 to over 50, enrolled in post-secondary vocational institutes and of 100 non-students in the same Wisconsin communities. Students over 25 years of age indicated they were most concerned about examinations, followed by concern about their own vocational abilities and difficulties in mathematics. They were much less concerned regarding job information, unemployment, interference of outside activities and money for school than were the younger students (Table 4, p. 11).

The authors concluded that adults returning to school have academic and guidance needs which are only gradually being recognized and met.

Two examinations of mature full-time students in the university were studied to determine any differences or similarities that exist between that population and its counterpart in the non-university, post-secondary institution.

Hiestand (1971) conducted a study to explore factors which encouraged people to make or discouraged them from making a significant change in the nature of their careers during middle age. The study was conducted on full-time students at graduate and professional schools (N = 70). Hiestand chose age 35 as the criterion for "middle aged" because the person was not young with regard to a future career and was relatively old for admission as a student (p. 11).

When Hiestand asked the mature students why they returned to school (chap. 3), he received a wide range of answers which led him to conclude that there doesn't seem to be a "typical" older student. He received nearly three reasons for returning from each person on an open-ended question. He found the primary reasons for returning to school were overwhelmingly positive. He found the highest motivation for returning came from high interest in subject or field, followed by motives to acquire new skills. He stated:

> One common assumption is that a person who returns to school is attempting to realize frustrated ambitions. This is indeed a possibility, but it is also possible that the return to school to go more deeply into a field or to enter a new field may well provide the best way to maintain a high level of satisfaction in one's life. (p. 9)

A striking aspect of Hiestand's group of older persons was the short period of time they took to decide to return to school. Of those who responded to this question, 50% had planned their return for one year or less, with 14% planning for no more than one month. When asked about difficulties encountered, two-thirds said they had little or no academic problems, one-third indicated considerable or serious financial difficulties, and one-half indicated considerable or serious family problems (chap. 5).

Seventy-five per cent of respondents said that there were advantages in being older as a student. These were due to experience, maturity, and changes in personal qualities since previously in school. Seventy-five per cent also indicated their age presented some difficulties relating to aspects of subject matter, study habits, tests and research skills (chap. 5).

To ascertain the opportunities and barriers that exist for the older full-time student, Hiestand interviewed 60 university officials (chap. 4). He found that admission policies were vague with unclear criteria, many people were involved in the process and whatever the central policy, it was not uncommon to find that various groups, schools or departments within a university were openly taking stances at variance with stated school policy. He found criteria based on age were far less common in granting financial aid than in granting admissions. When Hiestand asked officials about their experiences with older students, the responses lacked unanimity and there was a lot of generalizing without substantiating data (p. 78).

Another examination of full-time mature university students was done by Skelhorne (1975) at the University of Toronto. Skelhorne was an observer-participant of the situation of the mature undergraduate student from 1969 - 1972 and then as a graduate student on that same campus. Her concerns about lack of services and facilities for this group and about the indifference of administrators to those concerns led her to collect data relating to conditions of mature students in

Toronto and in other North American universities by questionnaire, interviews, recordings of group sessions and observation.

She said:

> This study is not an exhaustive one but rather a critical reflection on the gaps between 'what is' and 'what ought to be' on the campus of the University of Toronto. I have tried to combine formal logic with what Marcuse terms the 'second dimension' - another way of knowing. I have come from my topic from two angles, the objective and the subjective. (p. 37)

Skelhorne discussed the problems faced by full-time older students in two categories; barriers to entry and barriers to completion (p. 28). Barriers to entry include lack of information about personnel or policies involved in the admission process, economic barriers, lack of time, domestic problems, psychological barriers (lack of confidence), geographic barriers and physical barriers (health problems). Barriers to completion include lack of facilities and services for adults, rigidity of institution (class schedules, deadlines), anxiety re academic competence, depersonalization, rejection of authoritarian system, intellectual isolation, inability to sort out priorities (lack of organization, poor study habits), pedagogical approach and indifference to adults life-work experience.

She recommends that a statistical profile of the number of mature full-time students presently on campus and on their projected numbers be developed (p. 35). She further recommends that a physical facility should be established specifically for mature students. This would be a meeting place for mature students and a place where they could rest, study, discuss mutual interests and/or concerns - and where they could support and reinforce each other (p. 31).

2.5 Literature relating to female mature students

The interest in the needs and motivations of women which accelerated in the 1970's is evident in the literature relating to mature women students. They have been examined or speculated about in every conceivable way. Several of the studies done were seen to have relevance to this thesis and are referred to in this section.

Two previous examinations of literature on re-entry women were found to be particularly valuable. Ekstrom (1972) conducted a thorough review of literature which examined barriers to women's participation in post-secondary education. She concluded from her interview that barriers that affect re-entry women can be classified into three categories. The first is institutional barriers (time deadlines for course completion, requirements regarding full-time studies, lack of flexibility in class location and time, and lack of child care facilities). Situational barriers (low finances and socio-economic background, attitudes of husbands, family responsibilites, place of residence, personal circumstances) were the second category, and the third was described as one composed of dispositional barriers (such as attitudes, motivation and personality).

Tittle and Denker's excellent article on re-entry women (1977) reviews existing literature as it relates to this group of mature student. The authors reported on Ekstrom's classification of barriers to re-entry, and they suggest the addition of a fourth category -

women's basic education. They suggest that girls are not encouraged or taught to look ahead to the different directions their lives may take, and that they receive inadequate educational and vocational counselling.

Tittle and Denker commented that current theories of career choice do not consider the problems women encounter in their attempts to integrate marriage, family life and school or work, nor do these theories consider the importance that male attitudes about vocational and marital roles of women have in determining what women will do. The authors state "It appears that many women's educational and vocational decisions are made on the basis of their sex, rather than their individual characteristics" (p. 572).

Brandenburg (1974) found that returning women students often faced resistance from husbands, families and friends, and that only a few got continuous support. Richards (1976) made the same discovery and she commented ; "The fact that over half the re-entry women at Fresco City College are here despite the objections of their families is the most striking finding of this study" (p. 39).

Richards also identified eight problems encountered by returning women, in order of importance, to be: shortage of time, school-related anxiety, role conflict, money problems, child care, study skills, counselling deficiencies, and problems with instructors.

Roach (1976) stated that several studies have shown that women lose their existing friend group when they re-enter school and that they experience "sociological isolation" until a new group of friends is acquired.

Steele (1968) found that re-entry women in the junior college had returned to school primarily to attain economic goals. The gaining of employment skills, preparation for a profession, and self-actualization were listed as the other major reasons to return.

Steele's respondents indicated that their main reasons for not continuing their education after high school were marriage (25%), had to go to work (18%), could not afford to continue (13%), wanted to go to work (10%), no particular goal to which school contributed (6%), disliked school (1%), other (4%) (p. 30).

She found that the most difficult problems the women experienced at school related to inadequate study habits, insufficient academic counselling and adjustment to student role. Difficulties experienced in their personal life were finding time to study, the increased work load, and objections from or guilt about spouse and/or children.

A study by Nero (1975) found that the main reason women returned to school was for financial reasons. Self-improvement, to have something useful to do in coming years, and a desire to feel a sense of achievement were the next most listed reasons for returning. The problems experienced, in order of importance, were lack of time, fatigue, less social life, financial problems and problems running the household. The major benefit experienced by these women was gaining a feeling of achievement. This was followed by increase in self-confidence, new friends and interests, feeling happier, feeling better about themselves in many respects as the perceived benefits.

Aanstad (1972) also studied mature women in a junior college and found that 60% of her sample reported problems at home as a result of returning to school. The most frequent problems were lack of time for household duties, not enough time to be with their families, opposition from relatives, child care while at school, and being too tired because of the extra work (p. 36).

A Canadian study conducted in Alberta (Ladan and Crooks, 1975) examined characteristics of mature women who return to university. They found the typical mature woman was 34.8 years of age, married and the mother of two to three children at home. Forty-two per cent were receiving financial support from their husbands, 31% were self-supporting and 27% had taken student loans (page 31). The mature women almost exclusively chose traditionally female occupations.

The authors compared responses from these mature women with a sample of young (under 21 years) sequential female university students. Both groups indicated the desire of educational advancement as a major factor in their decision to attend university. The younger students listed the influence of parents and friends and an interest in university life as major factors in their decision making. These were not listed by the mature students but 85% of this mature group reported a need for self-fulfillment or identity whereas the younger students did not mention this goal at all (p. 33).

Both groups indicated insufficient funds to be a major obstacle. Obstacles indicated by the younger group were distance, and opposition from significant others. Mature women listed lack of child care facilities, not enough time for study and family, and a lack of self-confidence as major obstacles also.

The mature woman was less concerned than the younger student about the attitudes of others but the attitudes of her immediate family were particularly influential to the mature student in her decision to re-enter school.

2.6 Literature relating to male mature students

An examination of literature relating to mature male students must, by necessity, be very brief. Only one article of relevance to this thesis could be found which dealt specifically with re-entry men. This study was also conducted in Alberta by Ladan and Crooks (1976). The authors examined the sparse literature relating to mature male students and concluded that "the literature suggests that a man who continues his education may be viewed by the academic community as pursuing 'feminine' goals" (p. 84).

Ladan and Crooks examined the characteristics of twenty-two male mature students who were matched in age to the female sample studied in 1975. The typical man was 34.7 years old and married. All the men were fully or partly self-supporting, with 14% of them having wives who worked and helped support them financially. They were found to be enrolled in male-dominated faculties, and 86% attended classes full-time (p. 85).

The primary motive for continuing their education was job advancement and financial goals. Twenty-three per cent of the men named self-growth as a personal goal, whereas 47.5% of the mature female sample had indicated this goal (p. 85).

Financial problems were the major obstacle for the men, as they had been for the women. Thirty-six per cent of the men indicated they had no problems, whereas only seven per cent of the women had made this problem-free assessment (p. 85).

Men reported they were less influenced in their decision by their family and social contacts than the women had been.

Ladan and Crooks concluded:

> A generalization is the mature student's motives and goals are consistent with their stereotypes. Men resumed their education in order to achieve future occupational success and concomitant financial rewards, whereas the women sought a more personal form of self-fulfillment, often precipated by role changes. Continuing education is viewed by mature males as a means of achieving self-actualization through vocational success, whereas mature women seek self-actualization through developing a self-identity. (p. 87)

2.7 Literature relating to mid-career changes

Another literature topic with relevance to this thesis relates to adults considering or involved in mid-career changes, as such changes often require the person to return to school.

A major study has recently been completed in the United States (Arbeiter, S.; Aslanian, C.; Schmerbeck, F.; Brickell, H., 1978) which examined the career transition needs of adults who were either anticipating or undergoing job or career changes. The data showed 36% of the population between the ages of 16 and 65, more than 40 million Americans, are in a career transition status (p. 1). This did not include any full-time students.

The Arbeiter study showed that adults in transition were predominantly female, white and between 20 and 39 years of age. Seventy-five per cent were 25 years of age or older. They were typically married with one to three children at home (p. 10). These in-transition adults had diversified educational backgrounds and most were employed full-time at semi-skilled or unskilled jobs.

The vast majority of the in-transition males (88%) were changing jobs, but females were split between those who were changing jobs (46%) and those who were re-entering the work force (48%) (p. 18). Sixty-two per cent of the in-transition adults stated they planned to seek additional education or training to help them prepare for a job or career. The greatest percentage (40%) of the adults with educational aspirations preferred "vocational/trade technical" programs (p. 21).

Arbeiter found that most in-transition adults did not know about agencies offering job, career or educational help in their communities. About half the adults who knew of agencies offering these services had used them. The reasons for non-use were inappropriate to needs (37%), lack of readiness to begin taking steps (19%) and lack of interest (11%) (p. 29).

Pascal, Bell, Dougharty, Dunn and Thompson (1975) prepared a report for the American National Science Foundation which was based on an evaluation of 300 items of literature relating to mid-life redirection of careers. The age group examined in this literature was from 30 - 55 years of age. The authors stated:

> Our first discovery in reviewing various contributions that touch on the question of adult vocational redirection was that, for people in their middle years, there is not a great deal of the kind of voluntary occupational change we have labelled mid-life redirection. For the vast majority of people, however bored, or frustrated, or limited they might feel by their current jobs, the prospect of making a substantial change is simply too daunting. Financial responsibilities, fear of the unknown, social pressures to continue in the established groove, disinclination to engage in serious study after years away from school - all contribute to keeping the number of shifters small. (p. 9)

The authors pointed to the need for more information regarding major mid-life career shifts and relating to the characteristics that distinguish redirectors from the rest of the populations.

Despite his criticism of much of the methodology involved, Bell (chap. 2 in Pascal et al., 1975), reported that studies have confirmed there is a relationship between job satisfaction and the desire for job change and career redirection. The literature suggests the two groups most likely to seek redirection are older persons in technical, data-oriented professions and persons in clerical occupation (largely women).

Pascal et al., after examination of career change programs sponsored by government, employers and unions, and of foreign and "special" programs, reported on finding a discouraging picture.

Most programs were poorly planned and had few or no counselling services. They suggest the programs should be broadened in scope to include those aged 30 - 55, from all socioeconomic groups (not just the poor and/or unemployed) and should be oriented toward the intellectual level of the high school graduate in lower white-collar occupations, as this is the group most interested in preparation for job change.

Pascal (chap. 10 in Pascal et al., 1975) summarized the findings of learning difficulties of adults over 40 years. He stated that these difficulties are increased if the older adults have a low level of educational attainment, have been performing routine tasks, cannot see the practical relevance of what they are asked to learn, are in a situation marked by frequent distractions, already have a good deal of experience in the particular field which may well be valuable but also may demand a great deal of unlearning, and if they have to rely on rote memorization as a learning technique (pp. 159-160).

Pascal et al. concluded that the literature examining the education of career-change adults is lacking in information regarding adult students' motives and on their career patterns following their education. The literature does concur on the need for certain minimum ancillary services for adults which include counselling, limited course loads, flexible schedules, liberal provisions for transfer of credits, credits for life experiences, neighborhood classes, child care facilities, correspondence study and job placement assistance (p. 166).

Frederickson, Macy and Vickers (1978) composed a profile of adults seeking help with mid-career changes, based on a one-year sample of 200 adult clients who sought aid from an adult educational outreach agency. They found ages ranged from 16 to 65, but 60% were between 26 - 45 years of age. Sixty per cent were females and they were individuals who had little experience in planning or decision making. The cost of further training and education was the major problem in acquiring the needed skills or knowledge (pp. 166-167).

Heddescheimer (1976) pointed out that occupational choice and decision making is gradually being recognized as an open-ended process that co-exists with an individual's working life. The structured career development theories are being revised to accommodate this new concept. Heddescheimer observed that career changes can be the result of environmental pressures such as family, job or societal changes or the changes can come about from pressures within the person which would relate to that person's search for satisfaction and the developmental stage the person is in. She supported Schlossberg and Troll's belief (1975) that these processes of adult development are primarily social and related to life events rather than to biological changes.

2.8 Literature relating to counselling of adults

Much has been written about the special counselling needs of mature students, and much about the lack of services to meet these needs. Ruyle and Geiselman (1974) found a need for special counselling for this group due to their broader life experiences, their motivations for learning and their distinctive educational problems. Yet they found special counselling and advisement services for adults in less than 10% of the colleges and universities they surveyed (p. 56). The authors found that the study substantiated their suspicion that certain policies of an institution may not be reflected by implementation - most encourage adults but don't publicize this, most welcome adult students but don't meet their special needs, and most grant credit or waive courses on the basis of a passed exam but don't encourage or publicize this route.

Hawkins (1977), in an Ontario study, stated:

> Counsellors have indicated that adults are devastatingly short of up-to-date, accurate and meaningful information on educational opportunities. In addition, they lack knowledge of the procedures to be followed in order to attain a particular educational or vocational goal. Many of the adults seeking education are also in need of encouragement, direction and a re-establishment of self-image. It is therefore most important that educational counsellors be made available to them. (p. 36)

A major survey of trends in counselling and information services for the adult learner was conducted for UNESCO by the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (Ironside and Jacobs, 1977). The authors observed that "the whole area of education counselling and information services for adults badly needs clearer definition, both functionally and in terms of language itself, of the concepts underlying the words and of their interrelationship with the act of learning" (p. vii). They examined a wide range of reports and studies from around the world and regretfully concluded that little attention was being paid to counselling and information needs and services for adult learners.

Ironside and Jacobs believe that the adult education counsellor plays a critical role in the experience of the adult seeking counselling and/or information. This belief was articulated when they commented:

> Since counselling is apt to be the initial contact for many adults with learning, the way that the adult is helped or encouraged to accept new versions of being a client, or student, is of decisive importance. It will tend to define almost everything else that happens. (p. 50)

A recent paper presented at a national conference in Ottawa (Peavy, 1979) emphasized that adult counselling must attend to three different but overlapping realities. The sociocultural reality will set the limits for the adult's decision making and choice, and the interactional reality (interactions with family, friends, education and work) will give direction and motivation to the individual's choice making. The third reality is the formation of the adult's inner sense of self and, Peavy stated, is perhaps the most important reality for the counsellor to take account of, as this is where the person experiences satisfactions and dissatisfactions.

Peavy observed that adult counselling is more needed than ever due to the increasing complexity of society where individual decision making, sense of personal control and attainment of stable, productive self becomes ever more perplexing. He stated that, to perform effectively, the adult counsellor should have access to occupational and educational training data, a sound working knowledge of adult development, and basic counselling skills.

This review of existing literature indicates that some research and thought has taken place regarding the situation of mature students. However, most of the literature pertains to populations that differ from that of the present study. Research has most often been done on part-time learners, university students, and/or mature women students. However, despite these differences, findings from these studies will be compared to the present study findings when they are appropriate.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

3.1 Methodology

The problem, as described, was identified following discussions with the officials in the Department of Continuing Education, discussions with counselling and administrative staff at the three institutes and an examination of relevant literature.

It was determined that a descriptive thesis would be appropriate because so little is known about the mature re-entry student in post-secondary, non-university institutes. Cross stated in 1968 "We know very little about the adult student who constitutes an extremely important segment of those enrolled in institutes of higher education" (p. 54).

More recent, similar observations by Aanstad (1972) and Holcomb and Anderson (1977) point to a continuing lack of information on this portion of the student population.

The necessity of doing accurate and precise descriptive research as a first step in analysis and further development of research is a common theme in research literature. Lovell and Lawson (1970) stated:

> Before much progress can be made in solving educational problems, descriptions of the phenomena must be obtained by means of descriptive research .... The nature of prevailing conditions, educational practices and existing attitudes must often be determined and the activities, objects and persons described. (p. 29)

This descriptive study was conducted by survey methodology, using a written semi-structured questionnaire as the data collection instrument.

3.2 Preliminary procedures

Once the problem had been identified, it was necessary to obtain permission to conduct the study. Initially, permission was obtained to work with the Policy Planning and Management Information Systems Branch of the Department of Continuing Education, Government of Saskatchewan. This included permission to access material in computer records regarding student enrolment, and to use the computer for analysis of data.

The next requirement was to obtain permission from the three institutes to conduct the research. The Assistant Deputy Minister of Operations for the Department of Continuing Education confirmed the decision to go ahead with the study at a meeting with the principals of the three institutes. They agreed to the research being conducted within their institutions, and indicated they would actively support the study. The principals, in turn, sent directives to their respective department heads to inform them of the upcoming study and to request their co-operation.

3.3 Population

The population for the study was composed of all full-time students who were registered in one or two-year programs and who were aged 25 years or over, as of January, 1979. The determination of which programs would be included was done by examination of program offerings at each institute and by confirming the programs and their duration with the registrars of each institute. One-year programs were defined as those programs of 35 weeks or more duration in one academic year. Two-year programs were identified as those covering 35 weeks or more in each of two academic years. These programs are listed in Appendix H of this thesis.

The names of the students and their programs were identified from the Student Information System which records all registrants in the institutes in Saskatchewan. A computer run was done on these records to identify all full-time students in the identified programs who were 25 years of age or older. This computer run indicated that 282 students, who met the definition of the population of this study, had enrolled in the three institutes in September, 1978. This was found to be 9% of the total student enrolment (N = 3144).

The student names, as identified by the Student Information System, were then reviewed by the registrar at each institute to confirm the lists and to make any necessary revisions. It was determined that 51 of the identified students were no longer full-time students at the time of the study (January, 1979). These students had either discontinued their studies, become part-time students, or been granted leave of absence. Following this revision of the population total, the population for the study was determined to be 231 students.

3.4 Developing the instrument

A written questionnaire was designed by the author after reviewing other structured survey instruments in the literature. Questionnaires used in studies (Aanstad, 1972, p. 29; Garbin and Vaughn, 1971, p. 203; Steele, 1968, p. 94; Waniewicz, 1976, p. 198) were among the instruments examined. Although no questions from these instruments were incorporated into the questionnaire for this study, this examination gave the author a clearer picture of the type of survey instrument used in previous research. Tittle and Denker's extensive review of the literature relating to re-entry women (1977) also provided more general insight into the type of data being collected in that field.

Literature discussing design of questionnaires was also examined. Berdie and Anderson (1974) was used extensively with specific suggestions regarding placement of certain questions (p. 62) and design of cover letters (p. 59) among the suggestions incorporated into the questionnaire design. Similar material in Kerlinger (1973) and Wiersma (1975) was also examined.

Discussions regarding questionnaire design also were held with officials of the Department of Continuing Education, with staff at the institutes and with people who had been mature students in the institutes in previous years. These discussions were carried out with the intent of producing a questionnaire that would be relevant to the people involved and of use to decision makers.

The first draft of the questionnaire was examined by a selected group of people which included university professors, officials at the Department of Continuing Education, university graduate students, adult counsellors, and several mature students.

Numerous revisions were made to this initial draft as a result of this examination. The revised questionnaire was then pretested on a randomly selected group of mature students who had graduated from institute programs the preceeding year. These students were selected from the programs identified for the study and represented all institutes with both sexes, several mature age groups and places of residence represented. Twenty pretests were mailed out with a covering letter requesting the participation of the recipient (Appendix A). Participants were requested to complete the questionnaire, record the time it took them for this completion, and to comment on the content and the clarity of the questionnaire. Eighteen completed pretests (90% of the total mailed out) were returned. These completed pretests were carefully examined and the comments were noted for the final revision of the questionnaire. The final revisions included deletion of three questions, addition of two questions and the restructuring or rewording of seven other questions.

The final revised version of the questionnaire (Appendix B) was eight pages in length and was estimated to require about 15 to 20 minutes to complete.

The questionnaire was designed to ask the following questions and to obtain the relevant data:

1. Who are the respondents? This includes age, sex, marital status, previous employment, past education, how long out of school, method of financing re-entry, and whether they plan to complete program.

2. Why have they re-entered the education system?

3. How was the decision made to return to school? Who was involved in the decision? Was a counsellor consulted? Was support or opposition received from others?

4. What were the major difficulties in returning to school?

5. What were the major benefits in returning to school?

6. What were the expectations regarding difficulties and benefits before re-entry? Were these expectations realized?

7. What would make it easier to return to the formal education system?

3.5 Data collection

It was decided that the questionnaire would be administered to the study population during the month of January, 1979. In an attempt to overcome the perenniel problem of low returns on mailout questionnaires (Berdie and Anderson, 1974, chap. 5; Wiersma, 1975, p. 142), a decision was made to administer the instrument on location at each of the institutes. In each institute a·specific room was assigned for the author's use for this administration, and dates were set that were convenient for the student population. These dates were set to avoid conflict with examination, holidays, study weeks, or other events that might affect the response.

As mentioned earlier, the principal of each institute sent a memo to department heads informing them of the upcoming study and requesting their co-operation (Appendix C).

All students identified on the revised list were sent a letter explaining the purpose of the study and requesting their participation (Appendix D). This letter also informed the students of the date and place of the questionnaire administration at their institute. The letters to the students were distributed through the internal system of each institute. This was done because of the uncertainty that the recorded home addresses of all students were current.

It became evident that certain groups of students would be unable to complete the questionnaire at the on-site administration. These were students in Health Sciences who were away from the institutes on clinical placements. Another letter was written for these participants (Appendix E) and the letter, questionnaire, and a stamped, self-addressed envelope were delivered to these students by institute faculty who were involved with the clinical placements. This method of distribution was chosen again because of inadequate records regarding place of temporary residence while the students were on clinical placements out of town.

A third group of students was identified which would be unable to complete the questionnaire on the specified date due to other commitments, but who could complete it at the institute at another time. The questionnaires for these students were left with institute faculty who distributed them to the identified students in a single administration. The completed questionnaires were then put into stamped addressed envelopes by the respondent and mailed directly to the author.

Questionnaires were coded according to institute, program and student respondent number. This coding was also recorded on a separate list of names of participants, but names were not transferred to the completed questionnaire, nor was any other identification of respondents made. The numbers were recorded solely for administrative purposes and to allow for the possibility of follow-up research in years to come.

Each student who appeared at the on-site instrument administration was given the questionnaire to complete by him or herself. The author was present in the room throughout the administration on the specified dates. No prepared introduction of the questionnaire was given by the author verbally, as the students had all received the letter explaining the purpose of the questionnaire. However, respondents were invited to request clarification of questions if they so wished. Very few respondents indicated a need for this clarification, and most completed the questionnaire in 15 - 25 minutes.

The students who completed the questionnaire at the on-site administrations were extremely co-operative and appeared to carefully and thoughtfully complete the questionnaire. Many of them stayed to talk with the author following completion of the questionnaires and elaborated on their responses, or commented that it was good to think and talk about their situation as mature students. Some students commented on the process in written statements at the end of the questionnaire. Representative of the verbal responses given directly to the author were the following written comments on two separate questionnaires;

> This questionnaire is a very good idea and I am grateful for the opportunity to vent my feelings. Although it will do me no good at all, maybe it will help some other mature students. Thank you.

and, "I appreciate the concern this questionnaire exhibits. Thank you for caring enough to find out about mature students".

Only one student made suggestions regarding the questionnaire. She stated that "a lot of people don't like being called 'mature students'", and felt that by answering "yes" to some of the questions a student might leave the impression that "they were dumb and that was why they quit school in the first place".

Those students who had received a letter regarding the on-site administration but who did not appear on the specified date were sent the questionnaire, a stamped envelope and a further memo (Appendix F) requesting their participation.

Follow-up letters (Appendix G) were sent in February to all identified mature students who had not yet returned a completed questionnaire.

It was not felt that the variety of methods of questionnaire administration was a problem despite the realization that students could discuss the questionnaire with others before completing it. This was not seen to be a major problem as the responses to the questionnaire were very individual and personal, with no "right" or "wrong" answers. Therefore, the risk of contamination was of minimal importance. What was seen to be important was that a high return be obtained on the completed questionnaires. As the entire population was being asked to participate, this desired high return seemed critical to ensure that the findings truly represented the population under study.

The total response to the questionnaire was 94% with 218 responses from the population of 231 mature students. Of the total response, 65% completed the questionnaire at the on-site administration, 26% received the questionnaire individually (while on clinical placements) and returned it by mail, and 9% received the questionnaire during the group administration by faculty and returned it by mail to the author.

3.6 Analysis of data

The author analyzed the data at the Policy Planning and Management Information Systems Branch, Department of Continuing Education. She used a computer program, the Statistical Package for Social Sciences, to tabulate frequencies and to calculate relevant cross-tabulations. This analysis included comparisons between male and female respondents, comparisons of responses of age groups within the population, comparisons of respondents in one and two-year programs, and comparisons of responses of students in divisional program groupings.

The responses of the participating students were keypunched directly from the questionnaire where appropriate. Portions of the questionnaire required that the author do a recoding of the responses and these coded responses were then transferred to the keypunch cards. The questionnaire as seen in Appendix B indicates which questions were recoded.

The only open-ended question on the instrument was given an initial coding regarding the "tone" and content of the added comments. This arbitrary classification by the author was used only to give an impression of these open-ended responses (which were given by 49% of the respondents). To further ascertain the content of these additional comments regarding the situation of the mature students, these responses were compiled for visual examination and analysis, and a further development of response categories was done.

CHAPTER 4

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION OF DATA

4.1 Introduction

The data were collected from responses to a questionnaire which was administered to mature students who were enrolled full-time in one and two-year programs in Saskatchewan institutes in January, 1979. The total population of 231 mature students was given the questionnaire and a 94% response was obtained (N = 218).

The questionnaire was designed with 43 structured questions and provision for one open-ended comment by the respondents (Appendix B).

Due to the large amount of data obtained, it was decided that selected data only would be shown in this thesis. Major tables were designed to show total percentage distributions with breakdown by sex and age. Tabulations were also done by one and two-year programs, program divisional groupings and other selected variables.

Because of space limitation, it was decided that differences to be reported from these various tabulations would only be those categorized as "moderate" or "major" differences. Moderate differences were defined as those with a 10 - 20% variation from the overall percentages shown on the major table for that variable; major differences were defined as those with a greater than 20% variation from those overall percentages.

4.2 Descriptive characteristics

1. Sex and age

The major descriptive characteristics of the population were those of sex and age. The breakdown of the total response (N = 218) shows:

a) Sex:

	N	%
Male	88	40
Female	130	60
TOTAL	218	100

This ratio is in concurrence with the findings of Curry and Johnson (1978), Daly (1977) and Ebersole (1976) who found more females than males attracted to American community colleges. It is also interesting to note that the 60:40 female:male ratio found is identical to the ratio of sequential students enrolled in Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology in Anisef's 1973 study. However, Saskatchewan Department of Continuing Education records (1979) show that total enrolments received by the three institutes from July 1978 to February 1979 were 63% male and 37% female.

b) Age:

	N	%
25 - 29 years	126	58
30 - 39 years	65	30
40 years & over	27	12
TOTAL	218	100

The oldest respondent indicated she was 56 years old. There were a total of 10 women 46 years of age or over, whereas the oldest male student was 46 years.

Table 1 shows that there is an inverse relationship between aging and the percentage of females in the age groups.

Table 1

Percentage Distribution of Sex by Age

	- Age (%) -		
Sex	25 - 29	30 - 39	40 & Over
Male	48	32	22
Female	52	68	78
Total %	100	100	100
# of respondents	126	65	27

This finding supports Hiestand's conclusions (1971) and Tittle and Denker's review (1977) that women are often only able to return to education in their late thirties and early forties when children have grown and home responsibilities have decreased.

2. Institute and program enrolment

Tables 2, 3 and 4 show that over half the respondents attended Kelsey Institute, over half were in two-year programs, and nearly half were in health science programs.

Table 2

Percentage Distribution of
Institute Enrolment by Sex and Age

Institute	Total (%)	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
Sask. Technical Institute	17	30	8	19	15	13
Wascana Institute	31	16	41	28	36	29
Kelsey Institute	52	55	51	53	49	58
Total %	100	101[a]	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

This ratio of mature student total enrolments in the three institutes differed from the overall ratio of all student enrolments. The Department of Continuing Education's 1977-78 Annual Report (1979a) showed Kelsey to have 43% of the total institute enrolments, Saskatchewan Technical Institute with 34% and Wascana with 23%.

Table 3

Percentage Distribution of Enrolment in One and Two-Year Programs by Sex and Age

Length of Program	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
one-year program	40	45	35	36	40	56
two-year program	60	55	65	64	60	48
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

Further analysis showed that in two-year programs, 45% were in first year and 55% were in second year.

Table 4

Percentage Distribution of Enrolment in Program Divisions by Sex and Age

Division Programs	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40
Applied Science and Engineering Technology	14	31	3	19	11	0
Health Sciences	48	17	68	44	54	48
Service Occupations	14	6	19	12	15	19
Administration/Business	7	7	8	7	6	11
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	40	2	18	14	22
Total %	100	101[a]	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Garbin and Vaughn (1971) also found that the largest portion of their mature student group was enrolled in health occupations.

Further analysis showed that 87% of the mature students enrolled in applied science/engineering technology programs were male, as were 95% of those enrolled in trades/pre-employment programs. Women accounted for 86% of mature enrolments in health science programs and 83% in service occupations. These findings support Ladan and Crooks (1976) finding that mature male students enter male-stereotyped education programs, and the findings of the Tittle and Denker (1977) survey regarding the female-stereotyped programs that mature women enter.

An analysis of Department of Continuing Education records (1979b) shows that this sex-stereotyping is continuing with younger sequential students. Ninety-six per cent of all students enrolled in trades/pre-employment programs in 1978-79 were male, as were 80% of those in applied science/engineering technology. Females accounted for 96% of all enrolments in health sciences for 1978-79. Wennevold (1975) also concluded that Manitoba sequential students continued to enter traditional sex-stereotyped occupations (p. 53).

3. Highest grade level completed in secondary school

Table 5

Percentage Distribution of
Highest Grade Completed in Secondary School by Sex and Age

Highest Grade Completed	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
Grade 10	4	7	2	2	5	11
Grade 11	6	8	4	4	11	0
Grade 12	90	85	94	94	84	89
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

Table 5 shows that a large majority (90%) of students completed Grade 12, which is senior matriculation in Saskatchewan.

Of those students who indicated Grade 10 as the highest grade completed, 78% were enrolled in trades/pre-employment as were 33% of those with Grade 11 completion. Of mature students enrolled in health sciences, 97% had completed their Grade 12, as had 94% in applied science/engineering technology, 90% in service occupations, 88% in administration/business, and 70% in trades/pre-employment.

Respondents were asked how they obtained their highest grade level in secondary school, as shown on Tables 6 and 7.

Table 6

Percentage Distribution of
Method of Obtaining Highest Grade in Secondary School by Sex and Age

Method of Obtaining Highest Grade	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Regular School	66	77	59	77	57	35
GED Test	22	12	28	18	25	35
Correspondence	2	1	2	2	3	0
Night School	6	7	6	2	9	23
Other	4	4	5	2	6	8
Total %	100	101[a]	100	101[a]	100	101[a]
# of respondents	217	87	130	126	65	26

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 6 shows that the regular school system was the most common method, but that a substantial number obtained their highest grade by the General Education Development Test (GED).

The "other" category was composed of responses listing upgrading or basic job readiness programs as their method of completion.

Minor or no differences were found in method of completion for the five program divisions with the exception that all those who completed by correspondence were enrolled in health sciences and those who indicated "other" (upgrading or basic job readiness) were equally divided among health science and trade/pre-employment enrolment.

Table 7

Percentage Distribution of Full-Time or Part-Time Status When Highest Grade Obtained in Secondary School by Sex and Age

Status When Highest Grade Obtained	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
Full-Time Student	77	79	75	82	76	52
Part-Time Student	10	11	10	8	8	24
Did GED	13	11	16	10	17	24
Total %	100	101[a]	101[a]	100	101[a]	100
# of respondents	209	87	122	123	61	25

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 7 indicates that most mature students completed their secondary education while full-time students.

4. Interval out of regular school system

In an attempt to understand the periods of time the mature students spent away from the regular school system, respondents were asked to indicate the year they completed each grade of high school. From these dates the years out of school following each grade were calculated as were the total number of years away from regular schooling. These are shown on Tables 8 and 9.

Table 8

Percentage Distribution of Respondents Out of School For One or More Years Following Grades in Secondary School by Sex & Age

Out of School for One or More Years Following Grades	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Following Grade 8	7	8	6	5	8	15
Following Grade 9	5	5	5	4	6	7
Following Grade 10	13	17	11	10	19	15
Following Grade 11	24	18	28	21	25	37
Following Grade 12	77	78	75	82	69	70
Total %[a]	126	126	125	122	127	144
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% because some students had multiple absences from school.

Of those who indicated an absence from school after Grade 8, the greatest percentage (33%) were enrolled in health sciences, and the greatest percentage (36%) of those who were away after Grade 9 were in health sciences and trades/pre-employment programs. Those with absences after Grade 10 had their highest percentage (35%) enrolled in trades/pre-employment, while health science had the largest percentage (62%) of those who were out of school following Grade 11. Students who were out of school following Grade 12 were distributed among the five programs as expected by overall distribution.

Table 9

Percentage Distribution of Total Number of Years
Out of the Regular School System by Sex and Age

Number of years out of the Regular School System	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Out of School 1-5 years	3	5	2	4	2	0
Out of School 6-10 years	53	63	49	86	10	7
Out of School 11-20 years	31	26	36	10	84	15
Out of School over 20 years	13	7	14	0	4	78
Total %	100	101[a]	101[a]	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 9 shows that over half the respondents had been out of school for 6 - 10 years and that the length of time away from school was directly related to increasing age.

The maximum total period of time away from the school system was 41 years, an absence that was indicated by a 56 year old woman enrolled in a service occupation program.

An examination of the total years of absence as related to program division showed that applied science/engineering technology programs had the lowest mean (9 years) and range of years away (5 - 20 years), while service occupations had the longest absences with the mean being 14 years and the range 6 - 41 years.

As 90% of respondents had completed Grade 12 (Table 5), a comparison was made between those who had all their interval away from school following completion of Grade 12 and those who had earlier or more frequent periods away from school. It was found that of those who completed Grade 12 (N = 197), 60% indicated their total years from school were following Grade 12, whereas the remaining 40% had intervals away from school earlier in their careers and often at several separate times. This finding supports the author's contention in Chapter 1 of this thesis that the term "non-sequential" as presently used does not accurately describe the mature students in the institutes.

5. Previous educational activity

In response to Garbin and Vaughn's observation (1971) that there is little information available on the period of time between high school and college entrance, an attempt was made to determine what educational activity had taken place during that period.

Table 10 indicates the percentages of respondents who had graduated from other post-secondary programs before enrolment in an institute in 1978. It dispels the prevalent opinion that large numbers of mature institute students are university graduates who have entered the institutes to get a job-oriented education.

Table 10

Percentage Distribution of Previous Graduation
From Other Post-Secondary Programs by Sex and Age

Previous Graduation	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
None	64	66	62	61	68	67
Business School	6	1	8	4	8	7
Other Institute	14	14	14	21	2	7
University	3	6	2	5	2	0
Apprenticeship	2	6	0	2	3	0
Hospital Course	5	1	7	1	9	11
Other	7	7	7	5	9	7
Total %	101[a]	101[a]	100	99[a]	101[a]	99[a]
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

"Other" post-secondary programs listed by respondents in Table 10 included teachers college, bible school, nursery school teachers, radio repair, hair dressing and Dale Carnegie sales course.

Table 10 shows that 36% of the mature students had previously graduated from post-secondary programs. Other institute programs were the most common form of previous graduation, followed by business school and hospital courses.

Of those who had graduated from other institute programs, 63% were enrolled in health sciences, as were 58% who had previously graduated from business school. The students over 30 years of age who indicated a hospital course as previously completed were primarily women who had taken nursing-related courses when these were administered by hospitals rather than institutes (before 1972).

Respondents were asked if and where they had taken credit and non-credit classes during the interval they were out of the regular school system. Tables 11 and 12 show these responses.

Table 11

Percentage of Credit Courses Taken
During Interval Out of Regular School System by Sex and Age

Credit Courses Taken	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
None Taken	60	60	60	64	54	58
Other Institute Courses	8	9	6	7	8	12
University Classes	26	25	27	23	35	19
School Board Credit Courses	6	5	7	5	5	8
Other	6	8	6	3	8	15
Total %[a]	106	107	106	102	110	112
# of respondents	207	83	124	118	63	26

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" credit courses indicated were Royal Canadian Mounted Police, armed forces, business school and International Business Machine keypunch.

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Table 11 shows that 60% of the respondents had taken no credit courses during the interval they were away from the regular school system. Those who did were most likely to have taken credit courses offered by universities.

Table 12

Percentage of Non-Credit Courses
Taken During Interval Out of Regular School System by Sex and Age

Non-Credit Courses Taken	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
None Taken	47	51	44	51	42	38
Institute	5	8	2	3	5	13
University	8	9	7	10	10	4
Community College	25	15	32	19	33	33
School Board Night Classes	8	9	7	8	10	4
Church	7	3	10	6	8	8
Community Group	11	5	14	6	27	17
Union	3	3	2	3	3	0
Voluntary Associations	11	5	14	6	15	25
Employer	13	14	12	11	17	13
Other	6	6	6	5	8	8
Total %[a]	144	128	150	125	178	163
# of respondents	200	79	121	116	60	24

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" non-credit courses indicated were sewing, language training, armed forces, water safety, missionary training, bible school, sales course, photography and dancing.

Table 12 shows that, of the 53% of the respondents who took non-credit classes during their interval(s) away from the regular school system, courses sponsored by community colleges were most frequently taken. This was followed by courses sponsored by employers, voluntary associations and community groups. A greater percentage of women had taken non-credit courses, using community colleges, community groups and voluntary associations more than men.

Tables 11 and 12 show that fully 60% of the mature students took no credit courses anywhere while out of the regular school system, and that 47% took no non-credit classes during that time. These students might be expected to have more difficulties when re-entering school than would students who had taken other classes while away from school. This will be examined later in this thesis.

6. Reasons for interval out of school

Respondents were asked to indicate the major reason for their interval(s) away from school. Table 13 shows the responses to this question.

Table 13

Percentage Distribution of Major Reason for Interval Out of School by Sex and Age

Major Reason for Interval Out of School	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
Completed school desired at the time	21	24	18	22	22	13
Disliked school	5	6	4	7	2	0
Could not afford to continue	12	13	12	11	13	17
Wanted to go to work	21	24	19	24	20	9
Marriage or plans to marry	20	2	31	11	28	39
Had no particular goal to which school seemed to contribute	11	20	5	15	6	4
Health reasons	1	0	1	0	2	0
Was not doing well in school	3	5	2	4	2	4
Other	7	6	7	6	6	13
Total %	101[a]	100	99[a]	100	101[a]	99[a]
# of respondents	211	86	125	124	64	23

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

"Other" reasons indicated for absences from school included joining the armed forces (4 respondents), looking after other family members (4), taking other training (3), was pregnant (2), wanted experiences other than school (2), training desired was unavailable in Saskatchewan at that time, and wanted to play professional hockey.

Table 13 shows the major reasons for the intervals out of school to be completion of schooling desired at that time, desire to go to work, and marriage or plans to marry. Financial difficulties and the absence of a goal toward which school contributed were the fourth and fifth reasons.

The obvious differences between responses by sex relate to the percentage of women (31%) whose main reason for leaving school was marriage or plans to marry, compared to the percentage of men (2%) giving that reason. Another difference relates to the higher percentage of men (20%) who indicated they had no particular goal to which school seemed to contribute, compared to 5% of the women giving that response.

The breakdown of reasons by age group indicates that the younger mature students were less likely to have left school for marriage but were most likely to have left because they had no particular goal to which school contributed and/or they wanted to go to work.

Carp et al. (1974) found that the greatest barrier for "would-be learners" was cost, mentioned by 53% of his respondents (p. 46), and Waniewicz (1976) had similar findings. Yet only 12% of respondents in the present study indicated that their major reason for leaving school was because they could not afford to continue.

A comparison of reasons for intervals out of school given by females in this study to those of Steele's female respondents (1968) for not continuing education after high school shows marked similarities. This comparison is shown in Appendix I of this thesis.

The five most indicated reasons for the interval(s) out of school (Table 13) when compared by program division are shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Percentage Distribution of Program Division Enrolment by Most Indicated Reasons for Interval Out of School

Program Division Enrolment	Total (%)	Wanted to Work	Completed School Desired at Time	Marriage or Plans to Marry	Couldn't Afford to Continue	No Particular Goal to Which School Contributed
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	11	16	7	19	30
Health Science	48	44	52	61	50	17
Service Occupation	14	13	9	22	8	17
Administration/Business	7	7	7	7	12	13
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	24	16	2	12	22
Total %	100	99[a]	100	99[a]	101[a]	99[a]
# of respondents	218	45	44	41	26	23

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

The high percentage (61%) of those indicating marriage or plans to marry as their main reason for the interval(s) out, and who are enrolled in health science, appear to be related to the high proportion of women in that division. Those who indicated their main reason to be that they had no particular goal to which school seemed to contribute are disproportionately high in the two division dominated by males.

7. Marital status

The marital status of respondents is shown by sex and age (Table 15) and by enrolment in program divisions (Table 16).

Table 15

Percentage Distribution of
Marital Status by Sex and Age

Marital Status	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
Single	29	38	24	44	12	4
Married	49	49	49	39	63	63
Common Law	5	7	3	5	6	0
Widowed	1	0	2	0	2	4
Divorced	6	2	8	5	6	11
Separated	10	5	14	8	11	19
Total %	100	101[a]	100	101[a]	100	101[a]
# of respondents	218	88	120	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 15 shows that nearly half (49%) the respondents were married, and that this percentage married was equal for male and female respondents. More males than females were single, while more females than males were widowed, divorced or separated. Not surprisingly, the majority of single respondents were in the youngest age group.

The marital status of respondents in various program divisions is shown on Table 16.

Table 16

Percentage Distribution of
Program Division Enrolment by Marital Status

Program Division	Total %	Single	Married	Common Law	Widowed	Divorced	Separated
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	14	20	0	0	0	5
Health Sciences	48	42	49	60	0	62	50
Service Occupations	14	17	8	10	100	0	32
Administration/Business	7	6	7	0	0	23	9
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	20	17	30	0	15	5
Total %	100	99[a]	101[a]	100	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	218	64	107	10	2	13	22

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Further analysis showed that 67% of single students had relocated to return to school, whereas 43% of married respondents had relocated.

8. Financial dependents

The responses regarding financial dependents are shown in Table 17.

Table 17

Percentage Distribution of
Financial Dependents by Sex and Age

	Total	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
Financial Dependents	%	Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
None	54	55	52	63	43	29
Spouse/Partner	6	10	3	7	5	4
Children	26	9	37	20	30	46
Spouse/Partner & Children	13	24	5	7	21	21
Parents	1	1	1	1	0	0
Other	1	0	1	1	0	0
Total %	101[a]	99[a]	99[a]	99[a]	99[a]	100
# of respondents	213	87	126	126	63	24

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 17 shows that 46% of respondents had financial dependents, with all but 2% indicated these dependents to be spouse/partner and/or children.

Of respondents who had children, 18% indicated they had preschool children, 25% had elementary age children and 12% had secondary school children who were financially dependent. More men had preschool children as financial dependents, whereas more women had elementary and secondary school age dependents. As expected, the ages of the dependent children increased as the age of the respondent increased. It was found 61% had no dependant children, 15% had one child, 13% had two children, 7% had three, 3% had four and 1% had five children.

9. Past employment and earnings, present employment status

To further understand the mature re-entry students in Saskatchewan institutes, they were asked about their last occupation (Table 18), number of years of paid employment (Table 19), and income of last paid job (Table 20).

Table 18

Percentage Distribution of
Last Occupation Before Returning to School by Sex and Age

Last Occupation	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Full or Part-Time Employed	79	86	74	83	76	64
Self-Employed	4	9	1	5	2	8
Homemaker	13	0	22	6	20	24
Unemployed	4	5	4	5	2	4
Total %	100	100	101[a]	99[a]	100	100
# of respondents	212	87	125	124	63	25

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 18 shows that only 4% of the respondents returned to school from an unemployed situation.

Respondents who were full or part-time employed or unemployed were proportionately enrolled in the five program divisions. Of those who were last homemakers, 67% were enrolled in health sciences.

Differences by sex relating to last occupation were, not surprisingly, that all those who indicated 'homemaker' were female, and most were over 30 years of age.

Table 19

Percentage Distribution of
Years Paid Employment by Sex and Age

Years of Paid Employment	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Sex (%) Female	Age (%) 25-29	Age (%) 30-39	Age (%) 40 +
None	4	1	6	2	8	8
Up to 2 years	12	10	14	10	18	8
2 - 5 years	36	29	41	46	18	30
6 - 10 years	34	38	31	40	29	12
11 - 15 years	8	15	3	1	23	4
16 - 20 years	3	2	3	1	3	12
Over 20 years	3	5	2	0	0	27
Total %	100	100	100	100	99[a]	101[a]
# of respondents	217	87	130	126	65	26

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 19 shows that 70% of respondents had from 2 to 10 years of paid employment before returning to school, and that more women than men had never had paid employment.

Table 20

Percentage Distribution of
Income Range of Last Paid Job by Sex and Age

Income Range of Last Paid Job	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Never had a job	3	1	4	2	5	4
Under $5,000 per year	17	6	25	12	24	22
$5,000 - $7,499 per year	20	14	25	22	18	19
$7,500 - $9,999 per year	21	16	24	24	13	26
$10,000 - $14,999 per year	28	41	19	31	29	14
$15,000 - $19,999 per year	8	15	3	9	6	7
Over $20,000 per year	3	7	0	1	5	7
Total %	100	100	100	101[a]	100	99[a]
# of respondents	212	87	125	123	62	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Statistics Canada (1978b) showed that the average income of males in Canada in 1976 was $12,430, and that of females was $5,285 (p. 15). Average family incomes were $19,000 and average incomes of unattached individuals were $7,632 (p. 14).

Respondents indicated that the median income range of their last paid job was between $7,500 and $10,000 per year. This would place this population within the national average for unattached individuals but well below the national average for family incomes (49% of study population were married and 48% indicated they had financial dependents).

Of the males, 41% indicated their income range of last paid job was from $10,000 - $15,000, whereas 74% of women had incomes below that range.

With the exception of the few (3%) earning over $20,000 per year, increased age did not correlate with higher income earned in last paid job.

These findings differ from those of Waniewicz (1976) who found, in his study of part-time learners in Ontario, that a majority of them were people with incomes over $20,000 (p. 173). Waniewicz's findings suggested that high income earners were more likely to meet their learning needs on a part-time basis. The present study shows that the full-time students earned substantially less than the population of Waniewicz's part-time study.

Table 21 shows an analysis of program division enrolment by income in broader ranges.

Table 21

Percentage Distribution of Program Division Enrolment by Income Range of Last Paid Job

Program Division	Total %	Never Paid Job (%)	Under $5,000	$5,000 - $9,999	$10,000 - $20,000	Over $20,000
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	0	6	9	26	17
Health Science	48	67	61	48	43	0
Service Occupations	14	0	14	24	4	0
Administration/Business	7	17	5	9	5	0
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	17	14	9	22	83
Total %	100	101[a]	100	99[a]	100	100
# of respondents	212	6	36	87	77	6

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

An interesting aspect of Table 21 is the high percentages of never-paid or low-paid respondents enrolled in health science compared to the high percentage of higher-paid respondents in the divisions frequented by males. Those who never had a paid job and who last earned over $20,000 were all enrolled in one-year programs.

Respondents were asked about present paid employment while a full-time student, and responses are shown in Table 22.

Table 22

Percentage Distribution of
Present Paid Employment by Sex and Age

Present Paid Employment	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Not employed	86	86	85	89	77	93
Full-time employed	2	5	0	0	6	0
Part-time employed	12	9	15	11	17	7
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

Table 22 shows that only 14% of respondents were employed while full-time students.

10. Relocation and commuting

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they had relocated in order to return to school, and whether they were commuting over 25 miles daily. Tables 23 and 24 show the responses given.

Table 23

Percentage Distribution of
Need to Relocate to Return to School by Sex and Age

Relocate	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Did relocate to return	52	72	38	62	40	33
Did not relocate to return	48	28	62	38	60	67
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

The surprisingly high percentage (52%) of mature students who relocated to return to school is of interest because many adult educators maintain that adults will not or cannot relocate to return to school. Obviously, some do, but the question remains unanswered as to whether there are many other potential adult students who are not enrolled because they cannot relocate. More men than women relocated, and the percentage relocating was inversely related to age.

Further analysis showed that of all those who relocated, 56% were male. This compares to the overall male percentage of 40% in the study population. Table 23 indicates that the person most likely to relocate is a male between the ages of 25-29 years of age.

Table 24

Percentage Distribution of
Need to Commute to School by Sex and Age

	Total	Sex	(%)	Age (%)		
Commute Over 25 Miles Daily	%	Male	Female	25-29	30-35	40 +
Do commute	13	9	15	13	14	8
Do not commute	87	91	85	87	86	92
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	212	86	126	123	64	25

It was found that 70% of all those who commuted over 25 miles daily were female. This would support Tittle and Denker's findings (1977) that family responsibilities prevent many women from relocating to return to school, and that they must either not go or commute long distances.

11. Members of present household

Table 25 shows who the members of the respondents households were while they were attending school.

Table 25

Percentage Distribution of
Members in Present Household by Sex and Age

Other Members in Household	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
None	15	21	12	20	13	0
Spouse/Partner Only	16	22	12	21	8	12
Children Only	10	1	16	7	11	19
Multiple	40	33	44	28	57	50
Friends Only	9	7	9	12	3	4
Parents Only	1	2	0	2	0	0
Landlord/lady Only	9	12	6	9	5	15
Other	2	2	1	1	3	0
Total %	102[a]	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	210	83	127	121	63	62

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Most multiple responses indicated spouse/partner and children as household members. Six respondents reported cats as household members, and one financially-stressed male indicated that his cat was a heavy eater!

An interesting finding in Table 25 is that only 1% of male respondents shared a household with children only, whereas 16% of female respondents did. These responses suggest that the respondents were head of single parent households.

12. Methods of financing return to school

Table 26 shows the various way respondents were financing their return to school. It shows the total percentage of respondents who indicated each financing method as a source of funding and a further analysis of indicated main sources of funding by sex and age.

In Table 26, NRIM is the abbreviation for the Non-Registered Indian and Metis program, Canada Employment Centre is the current title of the former Manpower and Unemployment Insurance Centres, and VRDP is the abbreviation for Vocational Rehabilitation of Disabled Persons program.

Table 26

Percentage Distribution of Total Methods of Financing Return to School and Main Method of Financing by Sex and Age

Method of Financing Return to School	Total % Indicating Method of Financing	Total % Indicating Main Funding Method	Main Funding By				
			Sex (%)		Age (%)		
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Self	47	19	25	14	18	18	23
Spouse/Partner	32	23	16	28	20	29	23
Parents/Family	7	2	0	2	2	0	0
Bank Loan	3	1	1	2	2	2	0
Student Loan	29	18	20	17	25	11	8
Employer	1	1	1	2	2	2	0
Scholarship	3	0	0	0	0	0	0
Dept. of Indian Affairs	1	1	2	0	0	3	0
NRIM Funding	3	3	1	4	3	2	4
Other Student Bursaries	7	1	1	1	2	0	0
Canada Employment Centre (Manpower/UIC)	27	23	23	23	21	23	35
VRDP	3	3	3	3	2	6	4
Other	7	4	6	2	4	3	4
Total %	170[b]	99[a]	99[a]	99[a]	101[a]	99[a]	101[a]
# of respondents	217	217	87	130	125	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" methods of financing indicated by respondents included disability pension, Workman's Compensation Board, Department of Northern Saskatchewan, Canadian International Development Agency, social services, and, according to one respondent, "by sacrifice". Of respondents indicating such "other" methods, 73% were female.

Table 26 shows that the most-indicated main sources of funding were spouse/partner and Canada Employment Centre, both of which were the main financial source for 23% of the respondents. The other two main funding sources were self (19%) and student loans (18%).

It is interesting to note from Table 26 that nearly half (47%) of the respondents indicated they were partly self-financed but only 19% indicated self as the main source of funding. Student loans were the main source of funding for about two-thirds of students who received such loans, and most people being financed by the Canada Employment Centre considered that to be their main funding source.

More men indicated self as main source of funding and more women indicated spouse/partner to be the main source. However, 16% of males showed their main source of funding to be spouse/partner and 14% of females showed self to be main funding source.

Student loans were indicated more often as the main funding source by the youngest age group, whereas the Canada Employment Centre was identified as such by more of the older group.

An obvious difference between these findings and those of Anisef (1973), Major (1973), and Wennevold (1975) regarding younger sequential students is that the younger students all were relying on parental assistance as their major source of school financing. The university women in Ladan and Crooks' 1975 Alberta study showed that 42% received financial support from husbands, 31% were self-supporting, and 27% had taken student loans (p. 31). The present study shows lower percentages in each category.

Further examination of the four major sources of school financing (as indicated in Table 26) showed differences by program division enrolment. This is displayed in Table 27.

Table 27

Percentage Distribution of
Program Division Enrolment by Four Main Sources of Funding

Program Division	Total %	Spouse/Partner	C.E.C.	Self	Student Loan
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	22	6	28	8
Health Sciences	48	58	34	35	68
Service Occupations	14	14	14	17	10
Administration/Business	7	2	10	7	8
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	4	36	13	8
Total %	100	100	100	101[a]	100
# of respondents	218	50	50	40	40

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 27 shows that major differences existed among major funding sources for divisions. Respondents in health sciences had more main funding from spouse/partner and student loans, those in applied science/engineering technology were more self-financed, and mature students funded by Canada Employment Centre were more often found in trades/pre-employment programs.

Of those indicating student loans as main funding, 90% were in two-year programs, as were 100% of those receiving scholarships. Of those receiving Canada Employment Centre (C.E.C.) funding as their primary financial source, 100% were in one-year programs. This latter situation is due to the fact that C.E.C. will only fund one-year programs and this will be discussed in a later section of this thesis.

Further analysis shows that students in two-year programs changed their main source of funding from spouse/partner (45%) in their first year to student loans (63%) in their second year.

13. Re-entry decision making and support/opposition received

Several questions were asked to determine how the mature students reached their decision to return to school. Table 28 indicates the length of time they considered the decision to return to school before they actually applied.

Table 28

Percentage Distribution of
Length of Time Considered Return to School by Sex and Age

Length of Time Considered Return	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Under 1 month	9	2	14	6	11	19
1 - 6 months	17	13	19	17	14	22
6+ to -12 months	16	19	14	18	12	15
1 - 3 years	43	51	38	47	38	37
4 - 5 years	9	9	9	6	15	7
6 - 10 years	5	5	5	6	5	0
Over 10 years	1	1	2	0	5	0
Total %	100	100	101[a]	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 28 shows that 42% of all respondents indicated that they seriously considered returning to school for less than one year before applying, and that 9% did so for less than one month. These findings show a striking similarity to those of Hiestand's group of mature university students (1977) where 50% had planned their return for one year or less, and 14% for no more than one month.

Further examination of the length of time spent considering the return to school showed that 90% of those who indicated less than one month had enrolled in two-year programs and 80% were in health sciences.

The mature students were asked if other people were important in their decision to return to school. The ones who indicated "yes" totalled 62%. There were no differences found by sex or age breakdown except in the 40 years and over group, where 48% indicated that others had been important.

Table 29 shows who was important in the decision to return, and examines who was most important with breakdown by sex and age.

Table 29

Percentage Distribution of Others Important in Decision to Return to School and Most Important by Sex and Age

Others Important in Decision	Total % Important	Total % Most Important	Most Important				
			Sex (%)		Age (%)		
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Spouse/Partner	60	53	51	54	51	55	54
Other Family Members	44	14	11	17	14	15	15
Employer	11	5	5	4	6	3	0
People at Work	27	8	9	6	8	8	8
Close Friends	41	10	11	10	10	10	15
Counsellor	29	8	11	5	8	7	8
Other	9	3	2	4	4	3	0
Total %	221[b]	101[a]	100	100	101[a]	101[a]	100
# of respondents	133	133	55	78	80	40	13

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" people who were important in the decision to return to school included family doctor, Workman's Compensation Board, exhusband, minister and "inmates at my place of work" from a correctional officer.

Table 29 shows that spouse/partner, other family members and close friends were the three important groups in the decision making regarding return to school. Spouse/partner was by far the most important single group indicated. Major (1973) and Wennevold (1975) both found that sequential younger students are most influenced in their decision making by parents and friends. Ladan and Crooks (1975) supported this finding and found that mature students were most influenced by their immediate families, but placed little importance on others in decision making. As 67% of the respondents of the present study indicated spouse/partner or other family as most important, these findings support Ladan and Crooks conclusion.

Ladan and Crooks (1976) reported that men were less influenced by others in their decision making than were women. The findings of the present study do not support this conclusion, as 64% of the males said others were important compared to 60% of the females.

Further analysis showed that 71% of those who indicated that close friends were important were aged 25-29, as were 69% of those who said people at work were important. Of those who said the counsellor, 53% of that group was male.

Analysis by program division showed only one minor difference with health science students showing spouse/partner and other family members to be slightly more important.

Respondents were asked what type of support or opposition they received for their decision to return to school. Table 30 shows the support they received and the sources of that support.

Table 30

Percentage of
Source of Support Received by Type of Support Given

Support Given By	Financial Support	Encouragement	Help with School Work	Help with Non-School Duties	Other Support
Spouse/Partner	61	45	30	62	13
Family Members	26	52	15	49	13
Employer	3	2	2	2	0
People at Work	0	6	4	3	0
Close Friends	2	34	34	10	27
Counsellor	4	6	4	2	20
Other	9	2	17	1	27
Total %[a]	101	147	106	129	100
# of respondents	114	169	47	101	15

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" financial support included student loans, manpower, and Workman's Compensation Board. "Other" encouragement was received from a minister, other students, and God. "Other" help with school work included department head, teachers, peers and classmates. "Other" support came from teachers ("as morale booster"), and NRIM. One respondent stated he "tried to get support from Canada Manpower but was told it was a waste of time and money".

Table 30 shows that spouse/partner gave most support overall, followed by other family members and close friends. The supportive role of friends was mainly in offering encouragement and giving help with school work.

Examination of support given by age groups showed that 80% of those who received help with school work from friends, 76% who got financial support from 'other family' and 69% of those who got encouragement from friends were all in the 25-29 year age group.

Differences found on examination by sex showed that females made up 75% of those who got help with non-school activities from other family, 72% of those who got encouragement from friends and other family, and 70% of those who got financial support from spouse/partner. Of those who indicated they received encouragement from counsellors, 80% were male.

Table 31 shows the opposition that respondents met regarding their decision to return to school.

Table 31

Percentage Distribution of Opposition Received Regarding Decision to Return by Sex and Age

Who Opposed Decision to Return to School	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Nobody Opposed Decision	73	78	68	74	69	74
Spouse/Partner Opposed	6	1	10	2	8	22
Family Members Opposed	10	11	8	8	12	11
Employer Opposed	4	5	3	6	0	0
People at Work Opposed	2	2	2	2	2	0
Close Friends Opposed	6	2	8	4	11	0
Counsellor Opposed	1	0	2	1	2	4
Others Opposed	4	1	5	2	8	0
Total % [a]	106	100	106	99	112	111
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

Reasons given for opposition from spouse/partner included "felt income needed", "family responsibilities", "personal", "because of course decided on (psychiatric nursing)", "no reason given", "not known", "believed women my age (42) should stay home and be happy and not work outside the home even when children are grown and have left home".

Reasons given for opposition from family members included "should support family", "family responsibilities", "income needed", "at your age?", "mother thought psychiatric nursing too demanding mentally", "felt school wasn't for me", and "couldn't understand why would leave good job".

Reasons for employer opposition were that employer wanted to keep employee and/or "couldn't understand why would give up a good job".

Reasons for opposition from people at work were "should keep job", "professional jealousy".

Reasons for opposition from close friends were "going to school would result in absence", "felt it was too difficult", "too old to return", "my friend's a nurse and thought I was crazy to take nursing", "teaching has better pay and shorter hours", "nursing friends tended to be negative".

Counsellor opposition was due to whether seriously thought course was appropriate, and whether person had adequate academic background.

Other people who opposed decision included inlaws, welfare and Social Services where an employee told the prospective student, "don't make waves".

Examination of Table 31 shows that 73% of the respondents received no opposition to their decision to return to school. Of the men, 78% received no opposition, as did 68% of the women. The largest sex related difference was that 10% of the women indicated opposition from spouse/partner compared to 1% of the men indicating such opposition.

Ekstrom (1972) identified attitudes of husbands as a major situational barrier faced by women who wanted to re-enter school.

Brandenburg (1974) found that few women received continuous support and that they often faced resistance from husbands, family and friends. Richards (1976) concluded that the most striking finding in her study on mature women at a California college was that over half were there despite objections from their family. Findings of the present study do not indicate that most women have returned to school despite opposition, although more women than men did face some opposition (primarily from spouse/partner). However, the question of how many women or men have not considered re-entry or enrolled because of opposition from others remains unanswered.

14. Counsellor involvement in re-entry decision making

Respondents were asked whether they had talked to a counsellor while making the decision to return to school. Sixty-two per cent indicated they had talked to a counsellor, and no differences were found in this percentage by sex or breakdown.

Over 80% of the students in service occupations, administration/business and trade/pre-employment programs had talked to counsellors, whereas 59% of those in health sciences and 55% in applied science/engineering technology had. Eighty-six per cent of students in one-year programs had talked to counsellors, whereas only 46% of those in two-year programs had.

Respondents who had seen counsellors were asked where the counsellor was employed. Table 32 displays the responses.

Table 32

Percentage of
Location of Counsellor Employment by Sex and Age

Place of Counsellor Employment	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Institute	34	23	42	35	31	41
Manpower	44	51	38	45	41	41
Indian Affairs	2	4	0	1	3	0
Community College	5	5	5	5	5	0
High School	2	1	2	1	3	0
Institute and Manpower	10	13	8	11	8	12
Other	18	17	18	12	25	24
Total %[a]	115	114	113	110	116	118
# of respondents	131	53	78	75	39	17

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" places counsellors were seen included 'Women in Action', Department of Northern Saskatchewan, Calder Rehabilitation Centre, Project Outreach, Al-Anon, Work Preparation Centre, Welfare, Workman's Compensation Board, church, parole officer, Saskatoon Community Clinic, Saskatchewan Psychiatric Nurses Association, and Saskatchewan Registered Nurses Association.

Table 32 shows that most respondents who had seen a counsellor had done so through Canada Employment Centre (Manpower). Those who had seen counsellors at the institutes were next in frequency, followed by respondents who had talked to counsellors at both locations. Females were more likely to have seen counsellors at the institutes, whereas males were more likely to have been to Canada Employment Centre counsellors.

Further analysis showed that students enrolled in two-year programs who had seen counsellors were more likely to have seen the counsellors in the institutes, whereas those enrolled in one-year programs were more likely to have seen Manpower counsellors.

When asked if testing had been done when the counsellor was seen, 46% replied that testing had been done. No differences were found on sex breakdown, but age breakdown indicated that 38% of those 25-29 years old had been tested, compared to 51% of those in the 30-39 year age group, and 67% of those 40 years and older. Inquiries regarding type of testing done showed the responses displayed in Table 33.

Table 33

Percentage Distribution of
Type of Testing Done by Sex and Age

Type of Testing Done	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Multiple Tests *	68	61	74	57	86	67
Aptitude Only	8	13	5	13	0	8
Skills Only	5	0	8	8	5	0
Interests Only	10	17	5	13	5	8
Other	5	4	5	4	0	17
Don't Know	3	4	3	4	5	0
Total %	99[a]	99[a]	100	99[a]	101[a]	100
# of respondents	63	24	39	30	21	12

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

*indicates more than one of the following three tests

Table 33 shows that, of the 29% of total respondents who had been tested by a counsellor, the majority had multiple tests done. Females who were tested were more likely to have had multiple tests than were males, but males were more likely to have been tested for aptitudes or interests only.

Students who indicated they had not seen counsellors were asked if they were aware that educational counselling was available for adults. Of those who were asked, 68% indicated that they were aware , with more males (72%) aware of the service than females (65%). A greater proportion (46%) of those aged 40 years or over were unaware of counselling availability, as were 33% in the 25-29 year group and 22% of those in the 30-39 year group.

Table 34 shows the responses obtained when the mature students who had not been aware of counselling services were asked if they would have seen a counsellor had they known one was available.

Table 34

Percentage Distribution of Whether Respondents Would Have Seen A Counsellor if Aware One Was Available by Sex and Age

Whether Respondent Would Have Seen a Counsellor If Aware One Was Available	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Don't Know	6	15	0	11	0	0
Yes	42	46	39	42	50	29
Maybe	25	15	30	21	20	43
No	28	23	30	26	30	29
Total %	101[a]	99[a]	99[a]	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	36	13	23	19	10	7

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

People who said they would not have talked to a counsellor even if they knew one was available gave reasons which included, "knew what I wanted to do", "talked with graduates of the program", "this is something I must decide", "I did not have to be talked into going to school - it was something I wanted to do", and "I needed money not advice".

Table 34 indicates that less than half (42%) of the respondents who were unaware of adult education counselling services thought they would have used the service if they had known of its availability. The others were unsure or definitely felt no need for such services. The written reasons for not needing to see a counsellor indicated that the respondents perceived the counsellor to be an advice-giver or a persuader, rather than someone who could offer information and decision making assistance.

Arbeiter et al. (1978) found that most in-transition adults did not know about agencies offering counselling, and that half of those who knew about these services had used them. It is interesting to note that in the present study, although all respondents had enrolled as full-time students, 17% were unaware that educational counselling was available.

15. Pre-enrolment information needs in retrospect

Respondents were asked to look back and indicate what information they wished they had received before enrolling in their program. Twenty-eight per cent indicated they had received adequate information in all areas. Table 35 shows the responses from those who felt they did not have adequate information before enrolment.

Table 35

Percentage of Retrospective
Pre-Enrolment Information Needs by Sex and Age

Pre-Enrolment Information Needs	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Program Content	31	28	33	35	22	37
Job Opportunities	22	24	21	26	12	30
Amount of Work Required in Studies	36	32	39	28	38	52
General Financial Costs	16	16	16	17	14	15
Specific Program Costs	11	11	11	14	8	4
Possible School-Home Conflicts	18	13	22	14	20	30
Instructors and/or Instructional Methods	25	25	25	28	20	26
Personal Suitability for Program	13	16	11	13	8	22
Other	7	9	6	6	9	11
Total %[a]	179	174	184	181	151	227
# of respondents	156	65	91	88	48	20

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" information respondents wished they had received included information relating to types of exams, financial assistance available, summer courses, part-time programs, required high school courses, "how baby sitting costs of students are not tax deductable but are for working mothers", how to get student loans, "Manpower conflicts with courses offered at different institutes", general pay rate when completed the course, "how a person is to survive on student loans", more about bridging program (nursing) as I feel it's too rushed and too much cramming in a short time".

Table 35 shows that most respondents wished they had had more information before enrolling regarding the amount of work required in their studies. The next most-desired information related to program content, followed by information regarding instructors or instructional methods and job opportunities. No major sex-related differences were found, but more women than men wished for more information regarding possible school-home conflicts. The felt need for information regarding amount of work required in studies and possible school-home conflicts increased with age.

Further analysis showed that students enrolled in administration/ business programs indicated the greatest desire for information on the amount of work required (desired by 69% in that division), and on program content (63%). Those who wanted more information (67%) regarding possible school-home conflicts were in health sciences.

Financial information needs were greatest for those enrolled in two-year programs. Respondents who indicated a need for more information regarding general costs of returning to school (74%), and those desiring more information regarding specific program-related costs (83%) were in two-year programs.

Of the trades/pre-employment enrollees, 41% indicated they had received adequate information in all areas, followed by health sciences (31%), service occupations (20%), and applied science/engineering technology and administration/business, each with 19%.

Only 28% of mature students felt they had received adequate information before enrolment. Ironside and Jacobs (1977) stated that education counselling and information services for adults are in need of attention (pp. 11-16). Unfortunately, there is no available data to show whether these same needs for information are prevalent among younger sequential students.

4.3 Lifestyle changes resulting from return to school

Respondents were asked if they were making major changes in their lifestyle to return to school. Ninety per cent indicated that they were making major lifestyle changes, and no differences were found in analysis by sex and age.

Those respondents who indicated they were making major lifestyle changes were asked to indicate what changes they were making and which was the most significant change. Table 36 shows the total percentages of respondents who indicated various lifestyle changes, and the percentage who indicated which change was most significant with sex and age breakdown.

Table 36

Percentage Distribution of Total Major Changes In Lifestyle and Most Significant Change by Sex and Age

Lifestyle Changes	Total % Indicating Change	Total % Most Significant	Most Significant Change				
			Sex (%)		Age (%)		
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Apart from Family	31	16	19	14	16	15	18
Apart from Closest Friends	38	3	6	1	5	0	0
Away from Activities I Enjoy	37	3	6	2	3	4	5
School Prevents Participation in Activities I Enjoy	45	7	8	5	8	4	5
Major Changes in Available Money	66	34	45	26	39	30	18
Less Time with Family	57	30	14	40	21	44	36
Less Time with Friends	57	2	0	4	3	0	5
Other	7	6	3	8	[illegible]	4	14
Total %	338[b]	101[a]	101[a]	100	100	101[a]	101[a]
# of respondents	192	183	73	110	107	54	22

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" major lifestyle changes reported included "rural living changed to urban living", "disciplining self to do homework", "don't get proper rest", "setting better goals for myself", "role change", "hard to get sufficient exercise", "hate Regina", "have to live in the city", "less time for self and grooming", "greater self-esteem", and "all things must be synchronized".

Table 36 shows that the most significant change in lifestyle related to major changes in available money (34% of respondents). This was followed by changes related to less time with family, and apart from family. Men were more aware of changes in available money, whereas women found having less time with their families to be the most significant change. The youngest age group found the change in money to be most significant, whereas the older two groups indicated less time with family to be of greatest importance. It is interesting to note that decreased time or absence from friends and activities were frequently listed as lifestyle changes, but were not considered to be the major changes undergone.

Further analysis showed that those who indicated that a major change was being apart from closest friends was equally divided among female and male respondents (whereas overall ratio is 60:40 female:male). More females indicated that school prevents their participation in activities they enjoy (70%).

Of all respondents 52% had relocated, yet 79% of those who indicated that being apart from family was a major change and 68% of those who indicated changes in money as major lifestyle changes had relocated.

Table 36 shows that the most significant changes made by mature re-entry students relate to changes in available money and separation from, or less time with, their families. Aanstad (1972) found that re-entry women found decreased family time to be a major change (and a problem). Ladan and Crooks (1975, 1976) found that both men and women reported their financial situation to be a major re-entry change.

4.4 Reasons for returning to school

Respondents were asked to indicate their reasons for returning to school as mature students. Table 37 shows the total reasons indicated for returning to school.

Table 37

Percentage of
Total Reasons for Returning to School by Sex and Age

Reasons for Returning	Total %	Sex %		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
To Get a Job	17	18	16	13	20	30
To Get a Better Job or Promotion	53	49	56	56	48	52
To Change Careers	45	57	38	46	40	56
For Personal Satisfaction	77	65	85	75	80	74
To Escape Boredom	20	22	19	24	17	11
To Make New Friends	10	11	8	10	11	7
To Develop New Skills	71	74	69	75	69	59
Health Problems Required New Training	8	10	6	5	11	15
Other	9	5	12	5	15	11
Total %[a]	310	311	309	309	311	315
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" reasons for returning to school included "I like nursing and people and want to help those who have not had our privileges", to obtain a job closer to my home on the farm (at nearby small hospital); to gain more self-confidence; to get a job where my hours don't conflict with child's school hours; to have better access to the United States labour market; marriage breakdown; a new identity; realized children are grown and I'm still young; mechanization; wanted to do something with life that is rewarding and more than just monetary; always wanted to be a nurse.

Table 37 shows that the most indicated reasons for returning to school were for personal satisfaction (indicated by 77% of respondents), to develop new skills (71%), to get a better job or promotion (53%), and to change careers (45%). Sex-related differences show more males than females indicated the goal of career change as a reason for return, whereas more women than men indicated one of their reasons for returning to school was for personal satisfaction. Age differences showed the youngest group more often indicating to get a better job or promotion, to escape boredom, or to develop new skills as reasons for returning. The older students more often indicated to get a better job, to change careers, or health-related reasons for their return.

Hiestand's study of mature university students in 1971 found that students gave nearly three reasons each for their return to school. The present study shows that respondents gave just over three reasons each on average.

Respondents were asked to select the major reason for returning to school from their indicated reasons. Table 38 displays these responses.

Table 38

Percentage Distribution of
Main Reason for Returning to School by Sex and Age

Reasons for Return	*Total % Reason for Return	Total % Main Reason	Main Reason By				
			Sex (%)		Age (%)		
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
To Get a Job	17	5	4	6	4	5	13
To Get a Better Job or Promotion	53	24	24	23	28	19	13
To Change Careers	45	15	26	7	17	11	13
For Personal Satisfaction	77	33	20	41	28	38	42
To Escape Boredom	20	1	1	1	2	0	0
To Make New Friends	10	0	0	0	0	0	0
To Develop New Skills	71	12	14	10	14	10	4
Health Problems Required New Training	8	4	6	3	2	5	13
Other	9	7	5	8	4	13	4
Total %	310[b]	101[a]	100	99[a]	99[a]	101[a]	102[a]
# of respondents	218	208	84	124	121	63	24

*Repeated from Table 37 for comparative purposes

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

Table 38 shows that four main reasons for return to school were for personal satisfaction (33%), to get a better job or promotion (24%), to change careers (15%), and to develop new skills (12%). It is interesting to note that although development of new skills was indicated as a reason for returning by 71% of respondents, only 12% indicated it to be the most important reason. More women than men indicated their major reason for returning was for personal satisfaction, whereas more men returned to change careers. Those indicating their main reason as getting a better job or promotion tended to be younger, and those seeking personal satisfaction tended to be older.

Steele (1968) found the primary reason for mature women returning to school was to attain economic goals, followed by gaining employment skills, preparation for a profession and "self-actualization". Nero (1975) supported Steele's finding that the main reason women returned was for financial reasons, but she found self-improvement to be the second most important reason. The present study indicates personal satisfaction to be the most important reason for women returning to school (33%), followed by the attainment of a better job or promotion (23%), and the development of new skills (10%).

Ladan and Crooks (1975) found that educational advancement was the main reason for both young and mature women to attend university. The mature women listed the need for self-fulfillment or identity as a major reason, whereas this was not mentioned by the younger sequential students. The authors concluded (1976) that men return to school to achieve future occupational success, whereas women sought more personal forms of self-fulfillment.

Examination of findings of the present study points out that the largest percentage of women (41%) indicated personal satisfaction to be their main reason for returning. To change careers was the most given main reason for the men's return (26%), followed by obtaining a better job or promotion (24%) and thirdly, for personal satisfaction (20%).

The four major reasons for returning to school (Table 38) were examined by program division and by one and two-year program analysis. The results are shown on Tables 39 and 40.

Table 39

Percentage Distribution of Program Division Enrolment by Four Main Reasons for Returning to School

Program Division	Total %	Personal Satisfaction	Better Job or Promotion	Change Careers	Develop New Skills
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	15	8	32	8
Health Sciences	48	68	41	19	42
Service Occupations	14	13	18	10	8
Administration/Business	7	0	12	6	4
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	4	20	32	38
Total %	100	100	99[a]	99[a]	100
# of respondents	218	68	49	31	24

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 39 shows that the majority of health science people returned for reasons related to personal satisfaction. Applied science/engineering technology respondents' return was more related to career change goals, whereas trades/pre-employment respondents had reasons of career change and skill development for their return.

Table 40

Percentage Distribution of One and Two-Year Program Enrolment by Four Main Reasons for Returning to School

One or Two-Year Program Enrolment	Total %	Personal Satisfaction	Better Job or Promotion	Change Careers	Develop New Skills
One-year	40	22	39	52	50
Two-year	60	78	61	48	50
Total %	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	68	49	31	24

Table 40 indicates that respondents in one-year programs gave more reasons relating to career change and skill development for their return, whereas two-year respondents were more likely to indicate personal satisfaction as the main reason for their return.

Further analysis showed that 90% of those who indicated career change to be their most important reason for returning were respondents who had relocated. Of those who had returned primarily to develop new skills, 42% had relocated. (The overall relocated respondents was 52%).

4.5 Difficulties encountered since returning to school

Respondents were asked to indicate what difficulties they had encountered since their return to school. Four per cent indicated they had no difficulties, and the remaining 96% showed which difficulties they had encountered. Respondents were asked to indicate which had been the greatest difficulty they had encountered since returning to school. The total difficulties indicated and the greatest difficulty by sex and age are shown on Table 41.

Table 41

Percentage Distribution of Total Difficulties (TD) Encountered and Main Difficulty (MD) Encountered by Sex and Age

Difficulties Encountered	Total % TD	Total % MD	Sex (%) - MD - Age (%)				
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
School Work Load	59	16	9	21	16	18	9
Lack of Money	54	19	23	17	23	16	9
School-Home Conflicts	34	9	3	13	7	13	4
School-Job Conflicts	3	1	1	1	0	3	0
Child Care Problems	16	2	0	4	3	2	0
Fatigue	42	3	1	5	2	5	4
Acquiring Good Study Habits	52	13	19	8	13	11	13
Inadequate Recognition of Work Experience	9	2	3	0	2	2	0
Adjusting to Role of Student	46	8	9	8	8	5	17
Insufficient Academic Counselling	2	0	0	0	0	0	0
Disappointment in Instructio	22	5	5	5	6	2	9
Lack of Grounding for Progra	11	1	1	1	1	0	4
Lack of Self-Confidence	24	5	7	3	4	7	4
Relationships With Other Students	13	1	1	1	2	0	0
Relationships With Teachers	6	2	3	0	2	0	0
Inflexible Timetable	10	2	2	3	1	7	0
Inflexible Curriculum	7	1	0	2	1	2	0
Fear of Inability to Learn New Material	23	4	2	5	3	2	13
Other	5	2	2	2	2	2	4
No Difficulties Encountered	4	4	6	3	3	3	9
Total %	442[b]	100	98[a]	102[a]	99[a]	100	99[a]
# of respondents	218	206	86	120	122	61	23

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" difficulties encountered included "lack of time for self and to just sit and relax", "because of my poor education at time I don't understand wording on certain questions", "don't like homework interfering with my lifestyle", "lack of time for other activities", "too much unnecessary filler or extra material not applicable to course", "getting child into school", and "divorce partly due to my return to school".

Table 41 shows that the most indicated difficulty experienced was school work load (indicated by 59% of respondents). This was followed by lack of money (54%), acquiring good study habits (52%), adjusting to role of student (46%), fatigue (42%), and school-home conflicts (34%). Although school work load was mentioned most frequently as a difficulty, it was second to lack of money when respondents indicated the main difficulty experienced. Child care problems, disappointment in instruction, lack of self-confidence and fear of inability to learn were mentioned by substantial percentages as difficulties, but rarely as the main difficulty experienced.

Table 41 shows that the main difficulty most frequently mentioned was lack of money (19%). This was followed by school work load (16%), acquiring good study habits (13%), school-home conflicts (9%), and adjusting to role of student (8%). Most women found school work load to be most difficult, followed by lack of money and school-home conflicts. Men expressed most difficulty with lack of money, followed by school work load and acquiring good study habits.

The 25-29 year and 30-39 year old age groups indicated the difficulties as shown overall, but the 40 and over group showed interesting differences. This group showed the greatest percentage of them (17%) had most difficulty in adjusting to the role of student, followed by acquiring good study habits and fear of inability to learn new material (13% each).

Further examination of the difficulties encountered (not main difficulty) showed some differences by sex and age for certain difficulties. These are displayed in Tables 42 and 43.

Sex related differences were found in six areas of difficulty.

Table 42

Percentage Distribution of
Sex by Five Areas of Difficulty

Sex	Total %	School Work Load	Fatigue	School-Home Conflicts	Fear Unable to Learn	Child Care Problems	Relations with Other Students	Inflexible Timetable
Male	40	26	29	29	29	15	57	57
Female	60	74	71	71	71	85	43	43
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	128	92	73	49	34	28	21

Table 42 shows males had more difficulty with relationships with other students and inflexible timetables, whereas females had more difficulties with school work load, fatigue, school-home conflicts, fear of inability to learn new material and child care problems.

Differences by age were found in four areas of difficulty and are shown in Table 43.

Table 43

Percentage Distribution of
Age Groups by Four Areas of Difficulty

Age Group	Total %	Lack of Self-Confidence	Relations with Teachers	Inflexible Timetable	Inflexible Curriculum
25 - 29 years	58	48	75	71	88
30 - 39 years	30	27	17	29	12
40 years and over	12	25	8	0	0
Total %	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	52	12	21	16

Table 43 shows that the 25-29 year old age group showed more difficulties in relationships with teachers, inflexible timetables and inflexible location of classes than did the other age groups. The older students, 40 and over, indicated more difficulty than the others regarding their lack of self-confidence.

When examined by program division, it was found that students in health sciences had more difficulties with school-home conflicts, school work load, child care problems and fatigue than did their colleagues in other divisions. Of the few respondents (N = 9) who indicated they had no difficulty, over half were in health sciences.

Lack of money was reported as a difficulty for 45% in one-year programs and 49% for students in the first year of a two-year program. Those in second year found this to be a more acute difficulty, with 66% mentioning it. Of those who indicated difficulty with acquiring good study habits, 62% were enrolled in one-year programs. Of those indicating difficulty with inflexible curriculum, 94% were in two-year programs, as were 76% indicating difficulty with inflexible location of classes.

Further analysis showed that those students who had their total absence from school following Grade 12 had moderately more difficulty adjusting to the student role than did those who had earlier or more frequent absences from education.

Students who relocated had moderate differences from those respondents who did not relocate. The relocated students had less difficulty with home-school conflicts and with child care problems, whereas they had more difficulties with inflexible classroom location and curriculum, and with lack of recognition for work experience.

Respondents who had taken no credit classes during their interval away from the regular school system had moderately greater difficulty with their adjustment to student role, school work load, lack of self-confidence, disappointment in instruction, and fear of inability to learn new material than did respondents who had taken some credit classes during their absence from school.

Respondents who had taken no non-credit classes while away from school showed moderate differences only in greater lack of confidence and fear of inability to learn new material.

Two further analyses were done examining the five areas of greatest difficulty (Table 41) by the time spent planning return to school (Table 44) and by program division (Table 45).

Table 44

Percentage Distribution of Length of Time Considered Return to School by Five Major Difficulties Encountered

Length of Time Considered Return to School	Total %	Lack of Money	School Workload	Good Study Habits	School-Home Conflict	Adjustment to Student Role
Less than 1 year	42	93	48	27	50	30
1 - 3 years	43	38	39	62	28	59
Over 3 years	15	12	13	12	23	12
Total %	100	101[a]	99[a]	101[a]	101[a]	101[a]
# of respondents	218	40	33	26	18	17

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 44 shows that, in the five most indicated major difficulty areas, the students who had planned their return to school for less than one year showed moderate differences in three areas. They were more likely to have experienced difficulties with the lack of money than their colleagues, but less likely to have experienced problems with good study habits or adjustment to the role of student. These latter two difficulties were more likely to have been experienced by those who planned 1 - 3 years, whereas students who planned their return for more than 3 years experienced more school-home conflicts.

The other moderate differences found were that more respondents who had planned their return for only 1 - 6 months had more difficulty with relationships with teachers and were more disappointed in the instruction than were respondents who had spent longer planning their return to school.

Table 45

Percentage Distribution of Program Division by Five Major Difficulties Encountered

Program Division	Total %	Lack of Money	School Work Load	Good Study Habits	School-Home Conflict	Adjustment to Student Role
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	18	21	23	0	12
Health Sciences	48	53	49	35	61	35
Service Occupations	14	13	12	4	33	12
Administration/Business	7	2	15	0	6	12
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	15	3	39	0	29
Total %	100	101[a]	100	101[a]	100	100
# of respondents	218	40	33	26	18	17

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 45 shows that school-home conflicts were experienced in disproportionately high percentages by those in health sciences and service occupations, and were not even mentioned as difficulties by the male-dominated divisions. Acquisition of good study habits and adjustment to student role were more prevalent problems for trades/ pre-employment respondents than for others.

Relating the findings regarding difficulties encountered to the existing literature is a difficult task, because the topic of difficulties encountered by mature students is well-travelled ground. The literature shows a pre-occupation with examining difficulties encountered, rather than benefits gained, when the mature student returns to school either on a part-time or a full-time basis. Chapter 2 of this thesis describes some of this literature, and selected portions of it will be mentioned again here.

Anisef (1975) asked younger sequential students who had enrolled in Ontario universities and colleges to indicate major difficulties they encountered. Forty per cent indicated no difficulties (compared to 4% of the present study population), and only 4.6% indicated financial problems to be a major difficulty (compared to 54% of the present study).

Hiestand's population of mature university students (1971) indicated that half had considerable or moderate family problems, and one-third had considerable or serious problems relating to financial and academic areas. The present study shows a similar proportion with family difficulties (here defined as school-home conflicts and child care problems), but shows a higher percentage indicating financial difficulties and academic problems (here defined as school work load, acquiring good study habits, lack of grounding for program).

Tittle and Denker (1977) postulated that career choice theories do not consider the problems women encounter trying to integrate marriage and family life with school. The present study shows that more women than men indicated school-home conflicts, child care problems, school work load, and fatigue to be their main difficulty (Table 41).

Nero (1975) found that the problems experienced by mature women were, in order of importance, lack of time, fatigue, less social life, financial problems and problems running the household. The present study shows that women indicated more difficulties relating to school work load, fatigue, school-home conflicts, fear of inability to learn and child care problems (Table 42). The main difficulties experienced by women, in order of importance, were school work load, lack of money, school-home conflicts, acquiring good study habits and adjusting to the role of student.

4.6 Benefits encountered since returning to school

Respondents were asked to indicate what benefits they had encountered since their return to school, and to indicate which of these they considered to be the main benefit. Table 46 displays the total responses regarding benefits encountered and shows main benefit by sex and age.

Table 46

Percentage Distribution of Total Benefits (TB) Encountered and Main Benefit (MB) Encountered by Sex and Age

	Total	Total	Sex (%) - MB - Age (%)				
Benefits Encountered	% TB	% MB	Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Obtaining New Information in Field of Interest	82	13	18	9	17	5	13
Meeting New People	75	0	0	0	0	0	0
Discovery of Ability to Learn New Material	62	7	3	9	6	8	8
Being Challenged Intellectually	66	7	6	8	7	6	13
Learning New Skills	83	7	9	6	7	5	13
Widening my Knowledge and Interests	85	16	14	17	19	13	8
Obtaining Required Education for Employment	63	15	20	12	14	19	13
Treated With More Respect by Other People	22	0	0	0	0	0	0
Making New Friends	67	1	1	0	1	0	0
Feel More Confident About Future	63	12	14	10	13	11	4
Getting Out of Boring or Routine Job	37	3	5	2	3	3	0
Involved in Something Worthwhile for Me	70	17	9	22	11	24	29
Other	6	3	1	4	2	6	0
None	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total %	781[b]	101[a]	100	99[a]	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	218	208	87	121	121	63	24

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" benefits included "increased self worth", "personal growth", "confidence", "realizing my own limitations", "the fact that I can better myself", and "completing a course I started years ago".

Table 46 shows that the total benefits mentioned most often were widening my knowledge and interests (85%), learning new skills (83%), obtaining new information in field of interest (82%), meeting new people (75%), and involved in something worthwhile for me (70%).

The greatest main benefits were being involved in something worthwhile for me (17%), widening my knowledge and interests (16%), obtaining required education for employment (15%), obtaining new information in field of interest (13%), and feel more confident about the future (12%).

Three items were found in both high total and high main benefit rankings. These were something worthwhile for me, widening my knowledge and interests, and obtaining new information in field of interest. Of the five most indicated main benefits, higher percentages of women showed the greatest benefit to be that of involvement in something worthwhile for them, whereas more men indicated that obtaining new information in a field of interest and obtaining required education for employment were the greatest benefits. Relationships of benefits with age showed a direct relationship for involvement in something worthwhile, and an inverse relationship for feeling more confident about the future and widening of knowledge and interests.

Further analysis showed that there were no moderate or major differences regarding benefits encountered when examined by sex and age.

This is of interest in light of the earlier finding that several such differences were found relating to difficulties encountered.

Examination of the five major benefits encountered (Table 46) by program division showed some differences as shown in Table 47.

Table 47

Percentage Distribution of Program Division
by Five Major Benefits Encountered

Program Divisions	Total %	Involved in Something Worthwhile	Widening my Knowledge & Interests	Obtaining Required Education	Obtaining New Information	Feel More Confident re Future
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	3	18	13	26	17
Health Sciences	48	63	50	31	52	42
Service Occupations	14	20	9	25	7	4
Administration/Business	7	3	9	6	4	17
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	11	15	25	11	21
Total %	100	100	101[a]	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	208	35	33	32	27	24

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 47 shows that moderate differences exist. Respondents who indicated obtaining new information in my field of interest were more likely to be in applied sciences/engineering technology than the overall divisional ratio would suggest. Those who indicated involvement in something worthwhile for me were more likely to be in health sciences while those who indicated obtaining education required for employment as the main benefit were more highly represented by service occupation enrollees (and by those in trades/pre-employment). Respondents who indicated increased confidence regarding their future were more likely to be administration/business programs.

Further analysis showed that of those respondents who indicated 'treated with more respect by other people' as a benefit, 69% were in health sciences, and only 2% in applied science/engineering technology programs.

Analysis by one and two-year program showed that 63% of those who indicated obtaining education required for employment as the main benefit were in one-year programs, whereas 74% of those who showed obtaining new information in my field of interest as major benefit were in second year. (The overall one year:two year ratio was 40:60).

Earlier in this chapter (page 58) it was reported that, of those respondents who completed Grade 12, 60% had their total interval away from school between Grade 12 and entering the institute. When comparing this group with those who had earlier or more frequent intervals away from school, two moderate differences were found regarding main benefits encountered. Forty-two per cent of the group who had their entire interval away from school following Grade 12 indicated that involvement in something worthwhile for me was the major benefit, whereas 73% of them indicated the main benefit to be obtaining the education required to get employment.

Writers and researchers on mature students spend much more time dealing with the difficulties encountered on return to school than they do on examining the benefits attained. However, some studies have examined these benefits. Hiestand (1971) found that 75% of his mature students said there were advantages to being an older student and that these advantages related to experience, maturity and changes in personal qualities since previously in school.

Nero (1975) found that the major benefit experienced by mature re-entry women was gaining a feeling of achievement, followed by an increase in self-confidence, developing new friends and interests, and feeling happier. The present study shows that the major benefit experienced by the women in the population was to be involved in something worthwhile for them. This was followed by the benefits of widening knowledge and interests, obtaining education required for employment and feeling more confident about the future.

In light of the emphasis which existing literature regarding mature students places on the difficulties encountered by these students upon their return to school, it is interesting to note from Table 46 of this study that respondents indicated 7.8 benefits each, on average, regarding the benefits which were encountered since returning to school. This can be compared with 4.4 difficulties per respondent on average (Table 41).

4.7 Realization of pre-enrolment expectations

In order to determine whether mature students had their expectations regarding their return to school realized, they were asked whether various aspects of their return to school had been as expected, or whether they had been more or less difficult than expected.

Tables 48 - 52 show the responses regarding these questions.

Table 48 shows responses given regarding expectations of student role adjustment.

Table 48

Percentage Distribution of Realization of Pre-Enrolment Expectations Regarding Student Role Adjustment by Sex and Age

Realization of Expectations re Student Role Adjustments	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
More Difficult than Expected	26	25	27	27	23	30
As Expected	52	52	52	53	54	41
Less Difficult than Expected	22	23	22	20	23	30
Total %	100	100	101[a]	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 48 shows that slightly over half (52%) of the respondents found the adjustment to student role to be as they had expected it to be. Those who did not have their expectations realized were fairly evenly divided between those who experienced more difficulty than anticipated (26%), and those who experienced less (22%).

Further analysis showed that 75% of those who had more difficulty than expected with student role adjustment were those who had taken no credit classes during their interval away from school.

Table 49 shows the responses given regarding expectations about difficulty of study content.

Table 49

Percentage Distribution of Realization of Pre-Enrolment Expectations Regarding Difficulty of Study Content by Sex and Age

Realization of Expectations re Study Content	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
More Difficult than Expected	43	40	45	41	42	59
As Expected	45	47	45	44	49	41
Less Difficult than Expected	12	14	10	15	9	0
Total %	100	101[a]	100	100	101[a]	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 49 shows that less than half (45%) found the difficulty of study content as they had expected, whereas 43% found it to be more difficult than they had expected. Of those aged 40 and over, 59% found the content more difficult than they had expected it to be.

Table 50 shows the responses given regarding expectations about amount of school work.

Table 50

Percentage Distribution of Realization of Pre-Enrolment Expectations Regarding Amount of School Work by Sex and Age

Realization of Expectation re Amount of School Work	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
More than Expected	51	44	55	51	51	52
As Expected	43	48	40	43	43	44
Less than Expected	6	8	5	6	6	4
Total %	100	100	100	100	100	100
# of respondents	218	88	130	126	65	27

Table 50 shows that less than half (43%) of respondents found the amount of school work to be as they had expected, and 51% found there was more school work than they had anticipated.

Table 51 shows the responses given regarding expectations related to financial costs.

Table 51

Percentage Distribution of Realization of Pre-Enrolment Expectations Regarding Financial Costs by Sex and Age

Realization of Expectations re Financial Costs	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
More than Expected	45	48	43	50	42	30
As Expected	51	47	54	45	54	70
Less Than Expected	4	6	3	5	5	0
Total %	100	101[a]	100	100	101[a]	100
# of respondents	217	87	130	125	65	27

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 51 shows that over half (51%) of respondents found financial costs to be as expected. Forty-five per cent found them to be greater than expected with half of the 25-29 year olds in this category, compared to 30% of those 40 years and older.

Further analysis showed that, of those who indicated financial costs were greater than they had expected, 73% were in two-year programs. Seventy-three per cent of commuters found costs higher than they had expected, as did 57% of those who had to relocate to return to school.

Table 52 shows the responses given regarding expectations about school-nonschool conflicts.

Table 52

Percentage Distribution of Realization of Expectations
Regarding School - Non-School Conflicts by Sex and Age

Realization of Expectations re School - Non-School Conflicts	Total %	Sex (%)		Age (%)		
		Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
More Difficult than Expected	36	32	39	37	35	35
As Expected	58	58	57	57	57	62
Less than Expected	7	10	4	6	8	4
Total %	101[a]	100	100	100	100	101[a]
# of respondents	217	88	129	126	65	26

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 52 shows that over half (58%) of respondents found school - non-school conflicts to be as expected, but that 36% found these conflicts to be more difficult than they had expected. Of the few (7%) who found these conflicts less difficult than expected, more were men than women.

Tables 48 - 52 show that the area where respondents had least realization of their expectations was relating to amount of school work where 43% found it as expected. The highest related to school - non-school conflicts where 58% indicated realization of their expectations. The area where expectations were most often exceeded related to amount of school work, where 51% indicated there was more school work than expected. Twenty-two per cent indicated that student role adjustment was less difficult than expected, the largest percentage to indicate their expectations had been too great regarding this possible difficulty.

Further analysis was done regarding the realization of the five expectations examined on Tables 48 - 52. It is interesting to note that no difference or only minor differences were found in all five areas when comparing students who had all their absence from school following Grade 12 and those who had earlier or more frequent absences. The same finding applied when students who saw counsellors were compared with those who did not, and again, when comparing the length of time respondents considered their return to school with the realization of their expectations.

4.8 Respondents' suggestions regarding alterations needed to facilitate the return of mature students to school

Respondents were asked to indicate what they thought should be altered to make it easier for mature students to return to school as full-time students, and they were asked to indicate what they felt to be the area most in need of change. Responses are shown on Table 53.

Table 53

Percentage Distribution of Total Suggested Alterations to Facilitate Return to School and Main Suggested Alteration by Sex and Age

Suggested Alterations to Facilitate Return of Mature Students to School	Total % Suggested Alterations	Total % Most in Need of Change	Most in Need of Change				
			Sex (%)		Age (%)		
			Male	Female	25-29	30-39	40 +
Provisions of Child Care Facilities	31	8	3	11	10	7	0
Flexibility in Time of Classes	30	6	3	8	4	8	5
Flexibility in Location of Classes	18	4	1	6	4	7	0
Special Counselling for Mature Students	35	5	4	5	4	7	5
More Financial Assistance for Mature Students	71	39	45	35	40	39	36
More Flexibility in Criteria for Funding Assistance	46	9	11	7	10	8	5
More Flexibility in Administration Criteria	14	4	5	3	4	2	9
More Information About Available Courses and Programs	32	8	10	6	7	5	18
Better Access to Resources	10	1	1	0	1	0	0
Changed Attitudes of Teachers to Mature Students	20	8	9	8	8	8	9
Changed Attitudes of Society to Mature Students	13	2	3	2	2	2	5
More Opportunities to Know Other Mature Students	22	4	4	4	4	2	5
Other	5	2	1	3	1	3	5
No Changes Needed	2	2	1	2	2	2	0
Total %	349[b]	102[a]	101[a]	100	101[a]	100	102[a]
# of respondents	218	194	80	114	113	59	22

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

[b] does not equal 100% due to multiple responses

"Other" suggested alterations that would make it easier for mature students to return as full-time students included "recognition of previous job experience", "changed government attitude to realize mature students are a social investment and not a drain on the system", "institute library open evenings and weekends", "decrease work load by extending length of course", "should have incentive program financially", "use dictation and note-taking with material obtainable so don't have to read and write so much", "more assistance in finding suitable accommodation when relocating", "more leniency to students with children with regards to having to miss some school due to illness of a child or a special event child might be involved in such as a Christmas party" (26 year old separated female with 8 year old child).

Table 53 shows that the most suggested alteration related to the need for more financial assistance for mature students, as indicated by 71% of the respondents. This was followed, in order of percentages indicated by respondents, by need for more flexibility in criteria for funding assistance (56%), special counselling for mature students (35%), more information about courses and programs (32%), provisions for child care facilities (31%), and flexibility in time of classes (30%).

Table 53 also shows that when respondents were asked to indicate what was most in need of change, they strongly suggested changes in financing with 39% indicating the greatest change needed was in more financial assistance for mature students, and 9% indicating more flexibility in criteria for funding assistance was the most needed change. These were followed by provisions for child care facilities, more information about available courses and programs, and changed attitudes of teachers (each of which was indicated by 8% of the students as most in need of change).

Both sexes and all age groups had their greatest percentage of respondents indicating that more financial assistance for mature students was the area most in need of change. Women indicated child care facilities to be next most in need of change, whereas men indicated more flexibility in criteria for funding assistance as second. The 20 - 25 year old group indicated provision of child care facilities and more flexibility in funding criteria as second most in need of change, whereas the 30 -39 year olds showed equal percentages indicating flexibility of class time, flexible funding criteria and changed attitudes of teachers of secondary importance for change. The respondents 40 years and over wanted more information about available courses and programs, more flexibility in admission criteria and changed attitudes of teachers.

Further examination showed more women than men (71%:29%) suggested alterations to provide more opportunities to get to know other mature students in the institutes. Sixty-one per cent of those who suggested altering provisions for child care were in health sciences, as were 72% of those who suggested the need for more flexible class locations. Trades/pre-employment enrollees were moderately over-represented in those suggesting flexible admission criteria and more information on courses and programs.

Of those who suggested the need for more flexible time of classes, 71% were in two-year programs, as were 80% of those who suggested flexibility in class location, 79% of those who suggested better access to resources, and 79% of those who suggested a need for changed societal attitudes toward mature students.

Those respondents who relocated gave more suggestions regarding altering flexible class location, more information regarding courses and programs, and better access to resources. Those respondents who did not relocate made up 73% of those who suggested the need for provision of child care facilities.

Examination of the areas indicated to be most in need of change showed that two-year people were moderately over-represented in those suggesting need for flexible funding criteria, whereas the one-year students were higher in their suggestions regarding more information on available courses and programs.

Table 54 shows the analysis of program divisions by the five areas suggested to be most in need of change (Table 53).

Table 54

Percentage Distribution of Program Division Enrolment by Five Suggested Areas Most in Need of Change

Program Division	Total %	More Financial Assistance	Flexible Funding	Teachers Attitudes	Child Care Facilities	Information re Courses
Applied Science/Eng. Tech.	14	20	29	13	13	13
Health Science	48	45	53	25	80	20
Service Occupations	14	12	12	19	0	20
Administration/Business	7	5	0	31	0	20
Trades/Pre-Employment	17	18	6	13	7	27
Total %	100	100	100	101[a]	100	100
# of respondents	218	76	17	16	15	15

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 54 shows that the suggestion for changes in financial assistance for mature students were spread through the five divisions according to overall proportions. The need for flexible funding criteria was more prevelant in applied science/engineering technology, whereas administration/business students showed a high percentage suggesting teachers attitudes were most in need of change. Child care facility provision was prominent among health care respondents who indicated that needed change, and information regarding courses and programs was important to a greater percentage of respondents in trades/pre-employment programs.

To compare the finding of this section to the literature, it was decided to re-examine the literature describing barriers to re-entry for mature students.

Carp et al. (1974) and Waniewicz (1976) both found that the greatest barrier to participation in learning for would-be learners was a financial barrier. Hiestand (1971) found that a major barrier was vague admission criteria and procedures. Skelhorne (1975) listed lack of information about personnel or policies regarding admissions and economic barriers as major hurdles for the mature student.

Ekstrom (1972) discussed barriers to re-entry for women as institutional, situational and dispositional. To this Tittle and Denker (1977) added a fourth type of barrier - women's basic education. Ladan and Crooks (1975, 1976) found financial obstacles to be a major barrier for both men and women.

Pascal (1975) reported that literature on career-change adults showed a need for certain basic services for adults which included counselling, flexible schedules and locations, credits for life experiences, and child care facilities. Frederickson (1978) found that cost of education was a major barrier to acquisition of needed skills or knowledge.

Ruyle and Geiselman (1974) found a need for special counselling services for adult students, as did Ironside and Jacobs (1977).

The present study supports much of this literature. The respondents strongly supported the need for more financial assistance and more flexible criteria in funding for mature students.

Thirty-five per cent of the respondents suggested there should be special counselling for mature students, a theme that runs through much of the literature.

4.9 Comments by respondents regarding experience as full-time mature students

Students were given the opportunity to write any further comments regarding their experiences as full-time mature students in a space provided at the end of the questionnaire. Forty-eight per cent of the respondents chose to make a written comment. Forty-five per cent of the women added a comment, as did 52% of the men.

1. Initial analysis for computer

The author created categories to group these responses for computer analysis and the comments were coded accordingly. Tables 55 and 56 show the responses, as categorised and coded by the author.

Table 55 represents the general tone of written comments by sex and age.

Table 55

Percentage Distribution of
Written Comment General Tone by Sex and Age

General Tone of Comment	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
Comments re Benefits	20	15	24	19	16	31
Comments re Difficulties	46	59	36	53	42	25
Suggestion or General Comment	23	17	27	16	36	25
Mixed Comment	11	9	14	12	6	19
Total %	100	100	101[a]	100	100	100
# of respondents	105	46	59	58	31	16

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 55 shows that nearly half (46%) of those who wrote a comment chose to write one that described some difficulties in their experience as a mature student. These comments were most likely to come from men in the 25-29 year age group.

Further analysis showed that moderate differences existed when these comments were examined by program division. Comments regarding difficulties had a disproportionate percentage from administration/ business programs whereas suggestions and mixed comments showed high percentages from health sciences.

Table 56 shows the specific content of the written comments, as grouped by the author, with sex and age breakdown.

Table 56

Percentage Distribution of
Written Comment Specific Content by Sex and Age

Specific Content of Comment	Total %	Sex (%) Male	Female	Age (%) 25-29	30-39	40 +
General or Questionnaire Related	13	15	12	17	6	13
Personal Situation	15	13	17	17	13	13
Program Content or Schedule	17	17	17	12	23	25
Student Role	10	11	8	10	6	13
Mixed	12	9	15	14	13	6
Studies or Studying	1	2	0	2	0	0
Admissions or Funding	20	20	20	21	19	19
Counselling or Instruction	9	13	5	7	10	13
Home-School Situation	3	0	5	0	10	0
Total %	100	100	99[a]	100	100	102[a]
# of respondents	105	46	59	58	31	16

[a] does not equal 100% due to rounding error

Table 56 shows that the greatest percentage of comments related to admissions or funding (20%), followed by program content or schedule (17%), personal situation (15%), general or questionnaire-related (13%), mixed (12%) and student role (10%).

2. Follow-up sorting and description of written comments.

It was decided that a more complete presentation of written responses would give greater accuracy to the analysis of the situation of full-time mature students in Saskatchewan institutes.

Written comments were sorted in a variety of ways until they were finally organized into seven groups. The seven groups and the percentages in each were comments relating to;

a) finances (general, student loans, Manpower) - 24%.
b) benefits encountered since return to school - 22%.
c) content and/or instructional methods - 17%.
d) teachers - 13%.
e) personal situation - 10%.
f) class location/schedule - 9%.
g) studying and/or lack of grounding - 6%.

a) Financial comments.

Comments relating to finances indicated a need for more financial assistance and/or a change in criteria for funding. Twenty-four students commented on difficulties they had encountered in this area. Ten of these students wrote of general financial concerns such as, "one cannot claim child care expenses on income tax if one is a mature student." (from a 29 year old married woman), or "I would like to see more financial assistance, especially when commuting involves over 90 miles every school day plus all the household and

and budget expenses." (41 year old separated man). Two other representative comments were:

> If the finances were better there wouldn't be as much stress on us. But when there's not enough money to go around and you can't afford to go out for dinner with your friends at school or provide your family with necessary things, it makes you feel inadequate. (26 year old divorced female)

and,

> The decision of a person to return to school is often decided from a financial point of view. Governmental policy seems to require that a person be practically destitute before government assistance becomes available. Thus, many people who return to school do so to obtain financing, rather than any desire to study or improve their lot. People should be encouraged to return to school by having financial support available, regardless of their means. (30 year old married male).

Comments regarding student loans were made by eight students and were represented by the following comments:

> I feel students like myself should be more readily available to student loans. My spouse was not in agreement for my returning to school, therefore financial assistance is bad. My husband owns a business farm, property and a house, therefore I can not get a student loan. Do they realize these are not my benefits? (32 year old married female),

> My wife had a part time teaching position at 400 dollars a month. It wasn't enough to go to school. Manpower wouldn't put me through. A student loan I applied for was not granted. By luck, my wife did receive a full time job afterwards and I was able to take this coarse (sic). (28 year old married male),

and,

> I really feel that the financial set-up is very unfair. As a married woman with 3 children, even though my husband had a job the financial strain is really great. Added expenses of child care, etc., buying a lot of convenience foods because I'm not able to do much baking is really adding up.
>
> I applied for a student loan last fall and was turned down and was very upset to learn several of my classmates-

> single girls whose parents support them were receiving loans as well as $500-1000 bursaries. With the responsibility of being a full-time nursing student as well as trying to raise 3 children I certainly don't think its fair to add the financial burden. If it wasn't for some financial help from my mother I likely wouldn't be in this class. (31 year old married female).

Comments regarding Manpower (now Canada Employment Center) assistance were made by six respondents and were represented by comments such as, "My biggest beef is with Canada Manpower and their so-called non-existent financial aid or sponsorship" (from a 27 year old single female) and, "My request for assistance through Manpower has been a 3 year test of endurance. Manpower discourages rather than encourages people to take advantage of their programs." (27 year old married male). Two further comments relating to Manpower were:

> I find it hard to accept the fact that students who are enrolled for only one year can be sponsored with a weekly income. But those enrolled in a 2 year program are not eligible. Surely it costs more to go to school for 2 years than for one. (28 year old married male)

and,

> I think that Manpower has put a lot of pressure on people relying on the grant by not telling them that they would not be paid for time they were unable to attend thats no fault of their own e.g. the time period between exam completion and field work. One person I know was told to go to welfare if it hit her that hard. Yet unemployment was still paid on a regular basis. Several times I've felt debased by having to chase manpower (sic) about my cheque. I felt it was an invasion of privacy and discrimination- also too much "passing the buck" or "we can't do anything about it". The course itself is excellent and I'm not sorry I'm taking it. (44 year old married female).

b) Comments regarding benefits encountered since return.

Benefits of return to school were commented on by 23 respondents. Representative comments included, "More people should be encouraged to participate in the programs. A worthwhile and fulfilling experience." (54 year old widowed female), and "I find it a very rewarding experience- I feel that I am at a stage now where I can more fully appreciate my own goals and potentials than when I left school." (26 year old married female). Further comments included:

> So far this experience has been very rewarding to me personally. I am amazed at how much information I've been able to absorb and how much I have been able to recall from so many years ago. My attitude has changed greatly about older students (people) not being able to learn new ways, material, attitudes, etc." (48 year old married female),

> This training at Kelsey was very rewarding to me and I am achieving a great deal through it. I am alone for the first time in 42½ years and going to school to educate myself gave me a purpose in life. I was strongly motivated to achieve a higher education and want to be self-supporting. (42 year old separated female),

and,

> I've very much enjoyed being a student again. Having the motivation to accomplish a desired task in an educational setting was new for me and this factor has spurred me to maintain a level of acheivement that is consistently better than I'd ever demonstrated before. On the basis of the preceding statements I'd definitely suggest that other people of my age or older consider returning to school. (26 year old married male).

c) Comments regarding content and/or instructional methods.

Eighteen respondents commented on difficulties they were experiencing in this area. Comments referred to the need for prepared notes, the difficulties and contradictions of individualized learning as expressed by a 27 year old female, "...how can a course be individualized (progressing at your own speed) and yet you have to be at a certain point at a specified time, otherwise you are penalized?", and concern that the "associated subjects" were inappropriate. Other comments included:

> The way of marking exams should be changed. Instructors themselves should be marking exams rather than the students themselves. Also job sheet assessments should be brought to the student so that he/she may be aware of his or her mistakes. Exam papers should be returned to students after marking. (26 year old male),

> My largest disappontment is with this coarses (sic) lab and shop classes. They are very poorly organized. Our shop projects are a complete waste of time. Nothing of use is made in them. As for our lab time it doesn't allow enough time to be fully confident of operating some of the equipment. The main text of our theory class is also years out of date and in need of revision. (i.e. Films, etc. from late 40's and early 50's)" (26 year old male),

and,

> The method of teaching and examining in some areas doesn't test my abilities because it is too general. For example multiple choice questions do not tell my level of understanding. I would rather have practical or verbal tests. Exams are for teacher's convenience." (32 year old male).

d) Comments regarding teachers.

Fourteen respondents commented on the teachers in the institutes. Four wrote supportive comments such as:

> I find the teaching staff and counsellors at Kelsey to be very supportive and understanding. This means a lot to me as a mature student in a situation where the majority of students are in a younger age group." (36 year old female).

The other 10 wrote of the need for teachers to improve "better classroom discipline", to give "more criteria...and not just to teacher's pets", and to improve interactions with students. One 53 year old woman wrote, "A majority of the teachers remain very aloof to mature students. Are they afraid of us? I've never even had coffee with one of them". Other comments included:

> I am pleased to see that you mention the attitudes of teachers toward mature students. It is a complex subject and would require more than this space to delve into it. At times, I feel so frustrated with the attitudes that "some" of the instructors have toward me that I have been tempted to quit several times. I wish they would at least, take time to read over any files that the school has about me and realize that I am not a lost soul--just filling in my time by taking this course. That I disliked my profession so much that I made a complete change--a difficult thing to do at 34 years old! (34 year old female)

and,

> Some of the instructors teach like they were teaching high-school kids. Some of the instructors also treat you like high-school kids, they don't respect the knowledge that one has experienced while in the work force. They don't respect you as a mature student, which makes it quite difficult at times. (53 year old female).

e) Comments regarding personal situation.

Eleven respondents wrote comments relating to their personal situation. The most eloquent one came from a 27 year old divorced woman who wrote:

> I have found my lifestyle has changed drastically since returning to school full-time. I have found it a very stressful situation as I have financial difficulties, academic worries plus the stress of raising two children by myself. My self-confidence falters when I am fatiqued, rushed and can find little time for myself. I have little time to spend with my children, as I am often very tired and this concerns me very much, creating a vicious circle of worry and fatique.

This single-parent situation was indirectly re-enforced by the comments of a 31 year old married woman who stated, " I would have to say that if you are a mature student with a family you need all the support and help you can get from your husband."

A 32 year old married woman indicated that her education plans were being altered due to her personal situation but that she would eventually finish her program. She stated:

> My daughter is 10 and has been accustomed to having me at home with her. Lately her marks at school and her behavior had changed enough that I had to go on part time, but I will finish - it'll just take me a bit longer.

Another respondent, a 25 year old male, commented on the difficulty he experienced having to discuss his personal life in front of his classmates. He wrote:

> I think a student should have more lee way, free to miss without having to do a detailed outline of what he or she was up to. In my case, lets say my wife gets sick or something else happens, like a dispute at home, it is hard to explain myself when a hole (sic) class is listening to what, where and how I missed school.

f) Comments regarding class location or schedule.

Nine respondents wrote comments about difficulties in relation to location or schedule of classes. Several women commented on the difficulty they experience because institute classes start earlier than their children's schools and the holidays do not coincide. Others wrote of the problems of relocating or commuting, as exemplified by the following comment:

> Biggest problem: Wife lives in Saskatoon myself in Moose Jaw. This means maintaining 2 residences, need of 2 cars, and being alone 5 nights a week. Wish my course was offered in Saskatoon. (28 year old married male).

Representative of comments relating to difficulties with clinical placements out of the city was the following comment from a 28 year old married woman:

> The Institute seems to have no consideration on the family burden of the adult student. We are sent out to other towns for clinical practice for several months where as the single and younger can stay in Saskatoon. I deeply wish they can give the priority to us as it is so important to our families and oursleves.

g) Comments regarding study habits and/or lack of grounding.

Seven students wrote about difficulties with study habits or inadequate background. They expressed concern that their earlier high school work had either been forgotten or was obsolete. A 46 year old woman typified these statements by commenting, " Learning how to concentrate and study has been the hardest. Also, lack of confidence that I could pass exams. Studying for exams has been the hardest for me".

A 37 year old woman wrote;

> My greatest difficulty was completing gr. 7 nineteen years ago. No high school, then a crash course at Community College for 2 yrs. I'm thankful to them but there was still this gap - not enough high school, not enough material covered for what was expected, especially in physical sciences.

Several students indicated a need for a refresher course before re-entering regular classes. The following was a typical statement in this regard:

> Perhaps a week long crash course in courses from High school (in my case Trigonometry, Algebra, and Physics) would help, not only in reviving old High school material, but would help in providing better study habits. (25 year old male).

The comments chosen to be included in this thesis were ones that were felt to be typical in tone and content to other similar comments. An observation by the author, who was in the room when most of the questionnaires were completed, is that the students gave serious thought to their written comments. Many said, after completing the comment, that they hoped their comments would be valuable in helping explain the situation of the mature student.

The findings of this study have been examined in this chapter. Discussion of noteworthy findings has been included, as has reference to relevant literature. Conclusions and recommendations based on these findings are in the following section, Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Summary of findings

The summary of findings is directly related to the specific objectives of the study as described in Chapter 1.

1. Descriptive data

a) Personal characteristics of full-time mature students in Saskatchewan institutes

The data analyzed showed that over half (60%) of the mature full-time students in Saskatchewan institutes were female. Over half (58%) of the total population were between 25-29 years of age, with 12% being 40 years of age or older. Sixty per cent were enrolled in one-year programs, with health sciences being the program division where most (48%) mature students enrolled.

Ninety per cent of the population had completed Grade 12 (senior matriculation) in secondary school and most had completed this schooling in the regular school system, although 22% had used General Education Development Tests as their method of completion.

Over half (53%) had been out of school for 6 - 10 years, but 13% had been absent over 20 years, with the maximum total period of time away from school indicated to be 41 years. Sixty per cent of those who completed Grade 12 had their total interval away from school following Grade 12, whereas the other 40% had earlier and/or more frequent intervals away.

Sixty-four per cent of the respondents had no previous graduation from post-secondary programs and those who had graduated previously were most likely to have graduated from another institute program. University graduates made up only 3% of the population. Sixty per cent of respondents had taken no credit courses during their interval away from school, and 47% had taken no non-credit courses during that interval. Those who had taken credit courses most likely took them at university, whereas community college offerings were most taken by those who had enrolled in non-credit courses.

Respondents indicated three main reasons for their interval(s) away from school; they had completed the schooling desired at that time, they had wanted to go to work, or they were being married or planning marriage.

Nearly half (49%) the respondents were married, with single people the next largest group (29%). Fifty-four per cent had no financial dependents, with 47% supporting a spouse or partner and/or children.

Past employment showed that 83% had been employed outside the home, 13% had been homemakers, and 4% had been unemployed prior to their return to school. Seventy per cent had been employed from 2 - 10 years in paid employment with only 4% never having had paid employment. The median income range of their last paid job was $7,500 - $10,000 per year.

Respondents indicated that most (86%) had no paid employment while full-time students at the time of the study.

Fifty-two per cent of the mature students had relocated to return to school and 13% were commuting daily over 25 miles.

The study showed that there were four main methods of financing used to return to school. These were, in order of importance, spouse/partner, Canada Employment Centre, self and student loans.

b) Re-entry decision making, support/opposition received and lifestyle changes

Respondents indicated that over half of them (52%) had considered their return to school from 1 - 5 years before enrolling. Forty-two per cent had planned their return for less than one year, with nine per cent indicating their planning had been for less than one month.

Other people had been important in the decision making about the return to school for many respondents (62%). The most important people were spouse/partner, other family members and close friends. These same groups of important others were the ones that gave support in a variety of ways. Seventy-three per cent indicated they had received no opposition to their decision to return to school. Of those who received opposition, it was most likely to have come from other family members.

Sixty-two per cent of respondents indicated they had seen a counsellor while in the decision making process. These counsellors were most likely employed by the Canada Employment Centre (referred to as Manpower by the respondents), or the institutes. Less than half (46%) of those who had seen counsellors had received any pre-enrolment testing.

Those who were tested were most likely to have received multiple tests. Of the respondents who had been unaware of the availability of counselling services, 42% thought they would have used the services if they had known of them.

Respondents were asked if they thought they had received adequate information before enrolling. Only 28% indicated they had received adequate information in all areas. Areas indicated by other respondents as ones they wished they had received more information about were related to the amount of work required in studies, program content, instructors and/or instructional methods and job opportunities.

Ninety per cent of respondents indicated they were making major changes in their lifestyle to return to school. The most significant change related to major changes in available money, followed by less time with family and apart from family.

c) Reasons for returning to school

Respondents mentioned, on average, slightly more than three reasons each for their return to school. Most commonly mentioned reasons were for personal satisfaction, to develop new skills, to get a better job or promotion, and to change careers. When asked to indicate the main reason for their return, the respondents most frequently indicated for personal satisfaction, followed by to get a better job or promotion, to change careers, and to develop new skills.

d) Difficulties encountered since returning to school

Respondents indicated, on average, over four difficulties which they had encountered since returning to school. Most mentioned was school work load, followed by lack of money, acquiring good study habits, adjusting to role of student, fatigue, and school-home conflicts. When asked to indicate the main difficulty encountered, students mentioned, in order of importance, lack of money, school work load, acquiring good study habits, school-home conflicts, and adjusting to role of student.

e) Benefits encountered since returning to school

Respondents indicated, on average, nearly eight benefits that they had encountered since returning to school. The one that was most mentioned was that of widening my knowledge and interests, followed by learning new skills, obtaining new information in my field of interest, meeting new people, and being involved in something worthwhile for me. When asked what was the main benefit encountered since returning to school, respondents most often indicated being involved in something worthwhile for me. This was followed by widening my knowledge and interests, obtaining the required education for employment, obtaining new information in my field of interest, and feel more confident about my future.

f) Realization of pre-enrolment expectations

In two areas less than half the respondents had their pre-enrolment expectations realized. Only 43% found the amount of school work to be as expected, with 51% finding there was more school work than they had expected. Forty-five per cent had their expectations regarding the difficulty of study content realized, with 43% finding it to be more difficult than they had anticipated.

g) Suggestions regarding alterations needed to facilitate the return of mature full-time students to school

On average, respondents offered 3.5 suggestions regarding alterations needed to make re-entry easier for mature students. The most suggested alterations needed were those that related to more financial assistance for mature students, followed by more flexibility in the criteria for funding assistance, special counselling for mature students, more information about available courses and programs, provisions for child care facilities, and flexibility in time of classes. When asked what was most in need of change, respondents strongly recommended changes in financial assistance, both in terms of quantity of funding available and in the criteria for funding. These suggestions were followed by suggested alterations in provision of child care facilities, more information about available courses and programs, and changed attitudes of teachers to mature students.

h) Written comments

Students who chose to write an additional comment at the end of the questionnaire (48% chose to do this) were most likely to write comments about the need for altered financing for mature students, the benefits and good experiences they had encountered since returning to school, program content, and teachers or instructional methods.

2. Differences found in descriptive characteristics

Determination of differences in descriptive characteristics was done by four major comparisons; by sex, by age, by respondents in one and two-year programs, and by respondents grouped by designated divisions.

a) Differences relating to sex

The overall ratio of respondents was 40% male to 60% female. Differences reported are those where this ratio varied by more than 10% for the given variable. It was found that more females than males enrolled in health sciences, with the reverse occurring in applied science/engineering technology and trades/pre-employment programs. Males were more likely to have finished their secondary schooling in the regular school system.

A marked sex-related difference was that 31% of the women had their interval out of school caused primarily by marriage or plans to marry. This compared with 2% of the men giving this reason. Men ranked the reason for being out of school, in order of importance, to be wanting to go to work, completed school desired at that time, had no particular goal to which school contributed, couldn't afford to continue. Women indicated marriage or plans to marry as the most mentioned reason for their absence from the school system.

A high percentage of males had spouse/partner and children as financial dependents, where a high percentage of females indicated only children to be financial dependents. All the respondents who indicated that their last occupation was homemaker were female.

Responses to income of last paid job indicated that fewer men had incomes below $5,000 per year, and that more men had incomes in the $10,000 - $15,000 range. More men than women had relocated to return to school, and more of them indicated that a counsellor had been important in their decision to return to school.

Females made up high percentages of those who got help with non-school activities from others, who got encouragement from friends and others, and who received financial support from spouse/partner. Males were a high percentage of those who got encouragement from counsellors. A high percentage of those who indicated that major changes in available money was the most significant lifestyle change they had undergone were male, whereas a low percentage of males indicated that less time with their family was a major lifestyle change.

More men indicated that they had returned to school for reasons of seeking a career change, whereas more women indicated they had returned for personal satisfaction reasons.

Men were more highly represented in those respondents who indicated difficulties with relationships with other students and with inflexible timetables. Women were highly represented in those indicating difficulties with school workload, fatigue, school-home conflicts, and fear of inability to learn new material.

More females were among the respondents who suggested a change was needed to provide more opportunites to get to know other mature students in the institute.

In the written comments at the end of the questionnaire, men were more likely to comment on difficulties they had encountered since their return to school.

b) Differences relating to age

The age breakdown of the total population showed that 58% were from 25-29 years of age, 30% were 30-39 years, and 12% were 40 years or older. Differences reported are those where this ratio varied by more than 10% for a given variable.

Women were over-represented in the 40 years and over age group, a finding which concurs with Tittle and Denker's conclusion (1977) that many women cannot return to education until children are grown and home responsibilities decrease.

Secondary school completion was more likely by regular school for the 25-29 year olds, but those 40 years and over were more likely to have completed by G.E.D. or night school. The length of time out of school was directly proportional to increasing age of the three groups.

In the 40 years and over group, fewer had incomes in the $10,000 - $15,000 range in their last job, and fewer had relocated. None were living on their own while students, nor were any enrolled in applied science/engineering technology programs. This 40 year and over group showed a high percentage indicating their main funding source to be Canada Employment Centre with a low percentage indicating student loans as a source.

Fewer of those 40 years and over indicated that others were important in their decision to return to school. More in the 25-29 age group indicated that close friends and people at work had been important in their decision to return to school. This younger age group indicated they had received more help with school work from friends, more financial support from "other family", and more encouragement from friends.

More of the 40 years and over group had received opposition from their spouse/partner regarding their decision to return to school.

Of respondents who had been tested by counsellors, the 40 years and over group was highly represented, but more in the 30-39 year old group indicated that they had multiple testing done when they were tested. Low percentages of 30-39 year olds and high percentages of those over 40 years were unaware that counselling services were available, and fewer 40 years and over indicated they would have seen a counsellor if they had known of the service.

More respondents 40 years and over indicated they wished they had received more pre-enrolment information relating to job opportunities, the amount of work required in their studies, and possible school-home conflicts.

A low percentage of those 40 years and over indicated that major changes in available money was the most significant lifestyle change they had experienced, whereas a high percentage of the 30-39 year olds indicated that their greatest change was in having less time available to spend with their family.

Responses indicated that more of those 40 years and older had returned to school to get a job and to change careers, with a low percentage of them indicating that skill development was a reason for returning. This age group was highly represented in those who indicated their main reason for returning was to get a job.

More in the 25-29 year age group indicated they had experienced difficulties with inflexible curriculum and timetable and in their relationships with teachers. More of those 40 years and over indicated difficulties related to a lack of self-confidence. The main benefit indicated as being involved in something worthwhile for me was over-represented in the 40 years and over group.

A disproportionate number of those 40 years and over found the financial costs of their return to school to be as they had expected, but they tended to find the study content more difficult than they had anticipated.

In the written comments at the end of the questionnaire, more 25-29 year olds commented on the difficulties they had encountered, whereas more 40 years and over commented on the benefits gained since their return to school.

c) Differences relating to one-year and two-year programs

The overall ratio of enrolments in one-year and two-year programs was found to be 40%:60%.

All of those respondents who had never had a paid job and those who had earned over $20,000 per year were enrolled in one-year programs. All of those who indicated that Canada Employment Centre was their main funding source were in one-year programs, whereas 90% of those receiving their main funding from student loans were in two-year programs. The main funding source for those in two-year programs changed from spouse/partner in the first year to student loans in the second.

A high percentage of those who had planned their return to school for less than one month were in two-year programs.

More students in one-year programs had talked to counsellors before enrolling. Students in two-year programs were more likely to wish they had received more pre-enrolment information regarding general financial costs and specific program-related costs.

More people in one-year programs indicated that the main reason they had returned to school was for career change or for skill development, whereas students in two-year programs were more likely to indicate personal satisfaction as the main reason.

A high percentage of respondents who indicated difficulty in acquiring good study habits were in one-year programs. Those in two-year programs were more likely to experience difficulties related to inflexible curriculum and timetable, and the second year students indicated lack of money as a major difficulty.

Respondents in one-year programs were highly represented among those who indicated that obtaining the education required for employment was a major benefit, whereas those in two-year programs were more likely to indicate obtaining new information in my field of interest as a major benefit.

Two-year program enrollees found financial costs to be more than they had expected. They suggested altering several areas in order to facilitate the mature students; more flexibility in classtime and location, better access to resources, and changes in societal attitudes toward mature students.

Respondents in two-year programs were more likely to indicate that the need for flexible funding criteria was the area most in need of change, whereas the one-year students indicated that the need for information on available courses and programs was of greater importance.

d) Differences relating to program division.

The overall enrolments of the study population showed that 14% were in applied sciences/engineering technology, 48% in health sciences, 14% in service occupations, 7% in administration/business, and 17% in trades/ pre-employment programs.

A higher percentage of those who indicated their reason for the interval(s) out of school to be that they had no particular goal to which school seemed to contribute were enrolled in applied science/

engineering technology. Those in health sciences were more likely to indicate marriage or plans to marry as the reason for their interval away from school. A high percentage of those who indicated homemaker as their last occupation were enrolled in health sciences.

A high percentage of those who had never had a paid job or who had earned under $5,000 per year were in health sciences. There were high percentages of applied science/engineering technology enrollees who had earned between $10,000 - $20,000 and of trades/pre-employment enrollees who had incomes from their last job of over $20,000 per year.

Examination of funding sources showed that a high percentage of those in applied science/engineering technology were mainly funded by self, whereas a high percentage in health sciences were mainly funded by spouse/partner, and in trades/pre-employment, the Canada Employment Centre funding was highly represented.

High percentages of students in service occupations, administration/business, and trades/pre-employment programs had talked to counsellors when deciding to return to school.

More students in administration/business wanted more information regarding the amount of work required and on program content, whereas health science students wanted to have had more information on possible school-home conflicts.

More health science respondents indicated that the main reason they returned to school was for personal satisfaction, whereas applied science/engineering technology people indicated more often that career change was the main reason. Those in trades/ pre-employment were more likely to indicate career change and development of new skills as their reason for returning.

A high percentage of students in health sciences indicated difficulties relating to school-home conflicts, school work load child care problems, and fatigue. School-home conflicts were more likely to be indicated as the most difficult area by those in health sciences and service occupations, whereas students in trades/pre-employment programs are more likely indicated acquiring good study habits or student role adjustment as their major difficulty.

A high percentage of applied science/engineering technology students indicated the main benfit they had attained was that of obtaining new information in my field of interest. Health sciences were more likely to indicate being involved in something worthwhile for me, service occupations showed a high proportion of those who indicated the main benefit was to gain the education required for employment, and administration/business students indicated that more confidence regarding the future was the greatest benefit.

Students in health sciences were more likely to suggest that child care facilities and flexibility of class location were in need of altering, whereas those in trades/ pre-employment indicated flexible admission criteria and information on available courses and programs more in need of change. Those in applied science/engineering technology showed a high percentage of those who felt that flexible curriculum and with lack of recognition of work experience. Those who had relocated (and those who were commuting) found the financial costs of returning to school to be more than they had expected. Those who relocated were highly represented in the respondents who indicated that alterations were needed in flexibility of class location, more information on available courses and programs, and better access to resources.

Students who had taken no credit classes during their intervals away from school had a greater percentage of difficulties in adjustment to student role, school work load, lack of self-confidence, disappointment in instruction, and fear of inability to learn new material. A high percentage of them indicated that they had found the adjustment to student role more difficult than expected. Respondents who had taken no non-credit classes during their intervals away from school had a greater percentage of the difficulties relating to lack of self-confidence and fear of inability to learn new material.

Respondents who indicated they had planned their return to school for less than one year had a greater percentage of the difficulties relating to lack of money, relationships with teachers, and disappointment with instruction. They indicated fewer difficulties with acquiring good study habits and adjusting to student role, whereas those who had planned from one to three years indicated more difficulties in those areas. Students who had planned their return funding criteria was most in need of alteration. This compared with a higher percentage in health sciences who suggested childcare facilities were most in need of change with administration/business students who indicated that teachers' attitudes toward mature students and information on available courses and programs needed most change, and

A higher percentage of the written comments which discussed area of information regarding available courses and programs.

A high percentage of the written comments which discussed difficulties encountered came from students enrolled in administration/business programs.

e) Differences relating to other factors

Other differences were found when students who had relocated to return to school were compared to those who had not, and when students who had taken credit or non-credit courses during their interval(s) away from school were compared with those who had not. When the various time periods for planning the return to school were compared, and when those who had all their interval away from school following Grade 12 were compared with those who had earlier and/or more frequent absences from school, some differences were found.

More of the students who had relocated indicated that being apart from their families and major changes in available money were major lifestyle changes for them. They had a low percentage of difficulties with school-home conflicts and child care problems, but a high percentage of difficulties with inflexible class location and for more than three years indicated a high percentage of difficulty regarding school-home conflicts.

Students who had their entire interval away from school following Grade 12 indicated a high percentage with difficulty adjusting to the student role. They represented a high percentage of the respondents who indicated that obtaining the education required for employment was the main benefit in returning to school, and a low percentage of those who indicated that involvement in something worthwhile for me was of greatest benefit.

5.2 Conclusions and Implications

1. No "typical" profile. The findings of this study point to the conclusion that there is no typical profile or profiles for full-time mature students in Saskatchewan institutes. An attempt to draw a profile would be misleading or inaccurate due to the diversities found in the personal characteristics, past experiences, and present situation of the mature students in the study. The implication of this finding is that mature students must be considered as individuals with differing experiences and needs.

2. Sex-related differences. The findings of this study indicate that definite differences do exist between the males and the females in the population. These differences relate to their age, past educational experiences, past income, reasons for discontinuing and for returning to school, the program enrolled in, and difficulties encountered upon returning to school. Female mature students indicated that they have more problems returning to school as full-time students due to factors such as less previously-earned income and more opposition to their return. They also reported difficulties after their return to school in relation to home-school conflicts, fatigue and fear of inability to learn new material. These differences due to sex appear to account for more differences than those related to either age or program. Implications of this finding would relate to the need for special counselling, support (financial and otherwise), and understanding of the situations of men and women re-entry students.

3. Age-related differences. The findings of the study indicate that there are some age-related differences but that these are often sex-related, due to the fact that women are over-represented in the older group of the population. The reasons for returning to school, expectations related to returning and difficulties encountered show differences that indicate counselling and information services should consider the different needs of various age groups.

4. Program-related differences. Most of the differences that appear among program divisions are due not to program division alone but rather to a combined effect of program and the sex of the majority of respondents in that program division. Health science respondents are predominantly female, whereas males make up a large percentage of respondents in applied science/engineering technology and trades/pre-employment programs.

5. Counselling and information services. A conclusion from this study is that there is a need for more information in courses, instruction, costs, time commitments, etc., so that the expectations of enrolling mature students can be more realistic than at present. The finding that only 28% of the respondents felt that they had received adequate information in all areas before they enrolled implies a need to examine the information services for prospective mature students. This lack of information was indicated by respondents who had seen no counsellors as well as those who had seen counsellors in the institutes, at Manpower, or through other agencies.

It appears that continued efforts must be made to clarify the role of counsellors in the decision-making process. The perception that they are directive, "persuaders", or "arm-twisters" needs to be replaced with the reality and the perception that their role is to help the potential students gather information and make appropriate decisions themselves.

6. *Financing*. An evident conclusion of this study is that mature students are unhappy with the financial assistance available to them. The main difficulty respondents experienced was lack of money and the main change they suggested related to financial assistance. Of the students who added written comments to the questionnaire, more commented about finances than any other topic. They indicated that the criteria for assistance needed changing, and that more assistance should be made available. This assistance is desired in both direct financial assistance, such as student loans and Canada Employment Center funding, and in indirect assistance through provision of services such as day care facilities.

The implication of this finding is that there is a need to re-examine the financial assistance available for mature students. If there is interest in encouraging or supporting mature students who are considering re-entry there appears to be a need to re-examine the acount and type of financial assistance available and the criteria required for receipt of such assistance. Part of this re-examination could include a study following respondents' graduation to see if, in retrospect, financial concerns continue to be seen as the most important difficulty and the area most in need of change.

7. Benefits encountered. A major conclusion from this study is that the respondents encountered many benefits on returning to school. The existing body of literature relating to mature students tends to dwell on the difficulties that confront these students, whereas the findings of this study indicate that the benefits should also be made known.

The implication of this finding is the need to inform planners, counsellors, and prospective mature students that this study population indicated that, on average, the benefits encountered by their return to school were nearly twice as many as the number of difficulties.

8. Decision to return to school. The study shows that the decision to return to school was a major decision that has meant significant changes in the lives of those who made it. Substantial numbers have relocated, many are commuting daily, and nearly all report major changes in lifestyle.

Most respondents, both male and female, indicated that other people were important in the decision-making process regarding the return to school. Most important were spouse/partner, family, and close friends, whereas professionals such as teachers or counsellors were not seen to be very important in this decision-making process.

9. Impact of participation in education. The participation in education during the interval away from school appears to have an

impact on the mature students re-entry experience. Those respondents who had taken no credit and/or non-credit classes while away from regular school had more difficulty adjusting to student role and school work load, and they indicated greater lack of self-confidence, disappointment with instruction, and fear of inability to learn new material.

The above nine conclusions appear to be the main ones that are indicated from this study. Specific recommendations relating to these conclusions and other aspects of the study are listed in the following section.

5.3 Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. That the information obtained relating to mature full-time students in Saskatchewan institutes be developed into appropriate informational vehicles which would be of use to admissions officers, counsellors, teachers and prospective mature students. These might be in the form of brochures, audio-visual presentations, workshops, reports, or other presentations useful in the counselling and/or information services provided.

2. That there be a re-examination of the financial assistance available for mature students and of the criteria applied to obtain this assistance. This re-examination should include possibilities for direct financial assistance and indirect assistance through provision of facilities such as day care.

3. That counsellors and/or instructors within the institutes devise an orientation program to assist mature students in maximizing their ability to study, to organize and co-ordinate their school work load in conjunction with non-school activities, and to obtain necessary "updating" in subject material necessary for specific programs.

4. That a follow-up study of this population be done following their graduation from the institutes to determine if their perceptions of their experience change following graduation, if their academic success related to any of their descriptive characteristics, and to

ascertain their "success" following graduation in their chosen endeavors.

5. That an examination be conducted to determine why 18% of all full-time mature students who enrolled in the institutes in September, 1978, were no longer full-time students by January, 1979.

6. That data be collected on sequential students and those under 25 years of age to determine if the findings of this study are typical of the entire student body, or whether they are specific to the mature students.

7. That the present use of terms sequential and non-sequential be re-examined in an attempt to better define students who return to complete their secondary schooling before entry into post-secondary education.

8. That Statistics Canada and its provincial counterparts continue their efforts to standardize their data collection procedures relating to post-secondary enrolments across Canada.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTE MATURE STUDENT STUDY

Policy Planning and Management Information
Systems Branch
Department of Continuing Education
1855 Victoria Ave., Regina S4P 3V5

Dear

This letter is coming to you because last year you were a student at one of the Saskatchewan Institutes and because you are over 25 years of age. This letter and the enclosed questionnaire are being sent to 14 other people who were also "mature" students last year.

In January, 1979 a study will be conducted among all the "mature" (25 years and older) students who are full-time students in the Institutes at that time. The purpose of the study is to gather information about these mature students and to discover why they returned to school, how they made that decision, what are the major benefits and difficulties of returning to school, and what changes they think could be made to make it easier for adult students.

The enclosed questionnaire is the first draft of the one we intend to use in January. However, we want to be sure that the questions are clear and that we have included all the important questions.

Therefore, we are asking your assistance in the following ways:

(1) Please complete the questionnaire.(as you would have completed it when you were a student last year.)

(2) Please indicate how long it took you to complete the questionnaire (in the space provided at the end).

(3) Then go back over the questionnaire and write any comments you have regarding the questions. We would like to know:

    (a) are the questions easy to understand?

    (b) should some items be added to make the question more complete? What?

    (c) should some items be taken out because they are repetitive or don't make sense? What?

    (d) are the instructions clear?

(4) On the enclosed yellow sheet, please write any general comments you have - is the questionnaire too long or too short, easy to fill out, etc.

. . . 2

It is our hope that the results of this study will help us to understand the mature student in the Institutes and to use this understanding in future planning.

Your assistance in evaluating this questionnaire will be most helpful to us and to mature students of the future. Please return the completed questionnaire as soon as possible in the enclosed stamped envelope. If you have questions regarding this letter or the questionnaire, please phone me (collect) in Regina at 584-8542 between 6:00 p.m. and 9:00 p.m. on week-nights.

Thank you for your assistance. If you wish to receive a copy of the final questionnaire or the study report, please indicate this on the completed questionnaire.

Yours truly,

Lorraine Hill,
Study Director.

APPENDIX B

SURVEY OF MATURE REENTRY STUDENTS IN ONE AND TWO-YEAR PROGRAMS AT SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTES

THIS QUESTIONNAIRE WILL BE USED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES ONLY. NO IDENTIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS WILL BE MADE IN RESEARCH REPORTING. ALL INDIVIDUAL RESPONSES WILL BE TREATED AS CONFIDENTIAL.

PLEASE MARK QUESTIONS WITH AN "X" UNLESS OTHERWISE INDICATED

PART A

---

1. Program presently enrolled in ______________________________.

2. If the program is a two-year program, are you in

First Year ☐ 1 Second Year ☐ 2

3. Are you planning to:

Definitely complete this program ☐ 1
Possibly complete this program ☐ 2
Switch programs ☐ 3
Drop out of school ☐ 4
Other (describe) ☐ 5
____

4. What is the highest level of secondary education you have completed?

Grade 10 ☐ 1
Grade 11 ☐ 2
Grade 12 ☐ 3

5. By which of the following methods did you obtain the grade indicated in the above question?

Regular school ☐ 1
GED ☐ 2
Correspondence ☐ 3
Night School ☐ 4
Other (describe) ☐ 5
____

6. When you obtained the grade indicated in Question 4, were you - a full-time student ☐ 1
- a part-time student ☐ 2

7. Please indicate below the year you completed each of the listed grades. (If you did not complete some of the listed grades, indicate this by drawing a line through that grade.)

Grade 8 completed in 19 _ _
Grade 9 completed in 19 _ _
Grade 10 completed in 19 _ _
Grade 11 completed in 19 _ _
Grade 12 completed in 19 _ _

PART A (Continued)

8. Have you graduated from any post-secondary programs?

No	☐ 1		
Yes - Business School	☐ 2	What year?	19 ___
- Other Institute Program	☐ 3	What year?	19 ___
- University	☐ 4	What year?	19 ___
- Apprenticeship	☐ 5	What year?	19 ___
- Other (describe)	☐ 6	What year?	19 ___

____

9. Your age indicates that you have been out of the regular school system for at least one academic year. What was the major reason for the interval(s) away from school? Indicate only one response.

- Completed schooling desired at that time ☐ 1
- Disliked school ☐ 2
- Could not afford to continue school ☐ 3
- Wanted to go to work ☐ 4
- Marriage or plans to marry ☐ 5
- Had no particular goal to which school seemed to contribute ☐ 6
- Health reasons ☐ 7
- Was not doing well in school ☐ 8
- Other (describe) ☐ 9

____

10. While you were not enrolled in the regular school system did you enroll in credit courses (other than those indicated in Question 8) at any of the following? Indicate as many as apply.

- None ☐ 1
- Other Institute courses ☐ 2
- University Classes (Correspondence, Extension or on Campus) ☐ 3
- School Board Credit Courses ☐ 4
- Other (describe) ☐ 5

____

11. While you were not enrolled in the regular school system did you enroll in non-credit courses sponsored by any of the following? Indicate as many as apply.

- None ☐ 01
- Institute ☐ 02
- University ☐ 03
- Community College ☐ 04
- School Board Night Classes ☐ 05
- Church ☐ 06
- Community Group ☐ 07
- Union ☐ 08
- Voluntary Organization ☐ 09
- Employer ☐ 10
- Other (describe) ☐ 11

____

PART A (Continued)

12. What was your last occupation before returning to school?

Full or Part-time Employed ☐ 1
Specify Job Title __________
Self Employed ☐ 2
Specify Job Title __________
Homemaker ☐ 3
Unemployed ☐ 4

13. How many years, if any, did you have paid employment before returning to school?

None ☐ 1
Up to 2 years ☐ 2
2-5 years ☐ 3
6-10 years ☐ 4
11-15 years ☐ 5
16-20 years ☐ 6
Over 20 years ☐ 7

14. What was the income range of your last paid job?

Never had a paid job ☐ 1
Under $5,000 per year ☐ 2
$5,000-$7,499 per year ☐ 3
$7,500-$9,999 per year ☐ 4
$10,000-$14,999 per year ☐ 5
$15,000-$19,999 per year ☐ 6
Over $20,000 per year ☐ 7

15. (a) How are you financing your return to school? Indicate as many as apply.

Self ☐ 01
Spouse/Partner ☐ 02
Parents/Family ☐ 03
Bank Loan ☐ 04
Student Loan ☐ 05
Employer ☐ 06
Scholarship ☐ 07
Dept. of Indian Affairs ☐ 08
NRIM Program Funding ☐ 09
Other Student Bursaries ☐ 10
Canada Employment Centre Funding (Manpower/U.I.C.) ☐ 11
Other (describe) ☐ 12
____

(b) Draw a circle around the box number above which indicates your main source of funding.

16. Please indicate if you have financial dependents in each of the following categories.

None ☐ 1
Spouse/Partner ☐ 2
Children ☐ 3 List ages of dependent children
____
____
Parents ☐ 4
Other (please specify) ☐ 5
____

17. Are you presently employed in a paid job?

No ☐ 1
Yes (Full-time) ☐ 2
Yes (Part-time) ☐ 3

PART B

---

18. How long did you seriously consider returning to school as a full-time student before you actually applied?

Less than one month ☐ 1
1-6 months ☐ 2
Over 6 months to less than 1 year ☐ 3
1-3 years ☐ 4
4-5 years ☐ 5
6-10 years ☐ 6
Over 10 years ☐ 7

19. (a) Were people other than yourself important in helping you make the decision to return to school?

Yes ☐ 1
No ☐ 2
If "No", go to Question 20.

(b) If yes, indicate who was important. Indicate as many as apply.

Spouse/Partner ☐ 1
Other Family Members ☐ 2
Employer ☐ 3
People I worked with ☐ 4
Close Friends ☐ 5
Counsellor ☐ 6
Other (please specify) ☐ 7
____

(c) Draw a circle around the box number above in 19(b), which indicates who was most important in helping you make the decision.

20. Please indicate which of the people listed in Question 19(b) have given you any of the following kinds of support.

Financial support from ______________________.
Encouragement from ______________________.
Help with school work from ______________________.
Help with responsibilities not related to school work from
______________________.
Other support (please specify) ______________________
from ______________________.

21. Did any of the following oppose your decision to return to school?

Spouse/Partner ☐ 1 Why? ______________________.
Family Members ☐ 2 Why? ______________________.
Employer ☐ 3 Why? ______________________.
People at Work ☐ 4 Why? ______________________.
Close Friends ☐ 5 Why? ______________________.
Counsellor ☐ 6 Why? ______________________.
Other (please specify) ☐ 7 ______________________
Why? ______________________.

Nobody opposed my decision ☐ 8

22. Did you talk to any counsellors while making your decision to return to school? (Such as counsellors in Institutes, Manpower, Indian Affairs, University, Community Colleges, etc.)

Yes ☐ 1
No ☐ 2
If "No", go to Question 25.

PART B (Continued)

23. If yes, where was the counsellor employed? Indicate as many as apply.

Institute	☐ 1	Community College	☐ 5
Manpower	☐ 2	High School	☐ 6
Indian Affairs	☐ 3	Other (please specify) ____________	☐ 7

24. When you saw the counsellor was any testing done?

No ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2

In which categories?

Aptitude Testing	☐ 1
Skill Testing	☐ 2
Interest Testing	☐ 3
Values Testing	☐ 4
Don't Know	☐ 5
Other ____________	☐ 6

25. If no to #22, were you aware that educational counselling was available for adults?

No ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2

If not, would you have talked to a counsellor if you had known one was available?

Don't Know	☐ 3
Yes	☐ 4
Maybe	☐ 5
No	☐ 6 Why not? ____________

26. Looking back, what information do you wish you had received before enrolling in your program? Indicate as many as apply.

I would have liked more information about:

- Program content	☐ 01
- Job opportunities after completion of program	☐ 02
- Amount of work required in program studies	☐ 03
- General financial costs of returning to school	☐ 04
- Specific costs related to my program	☐ 05
- Possible school-home conflicts	☐ 06
- Instructors and/or instructional methods	☐ 07
- My own suitability for specific programs	☐ 08
- Other (please specify) ____________	☐ 09
I received adequate information in all areas	☐ 10

PART C

27. Did you have to relocate to return to school?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2

28. Do you commute over 25 miles to school on a daily basis?

Yes ☐ 1 No ☐ 2

PART C (Continued)

29. Who are the other members of your present household? Indicate as many as apply.

None ☐ 1
Spouse/Partner ☐ 2
Children ☐ 3
Parents ☐ 4
Friend(s) ☐ 5
Landlord/lady ☐ 6
Boarders ☐ 7
Other (please specify) ☐ 8
____

30. Everyone makes some changes when he/she returns to school. Do you feel that you are making major changes in your lifestyle to return to school?

Yes ☐ 1
No ☐ 2
If "No", go to Question 32.

31. (a) If yes, what major changes in lifestyle are you making? Indicate as many as apply.

Apart from my family ☐ 1
Apart from my closest friends ☐ 2
Away from activities I enjoy ☐ 3
Schoolwork prevents participation in activities I enjoy ☐ 4
Major changes in available money ☐ 5
Less time with family ☐ 6
Less time with friends ☐ 7
Other (please specify) ☐ 8
____

(b) Draw a circle around the box above which indicates what you feel to be the most significant change.

32. (a) What are the reasons you returned to school? Indicate as many as apply.

To get a job ☐ 1
To get a better job or promotion ☐ 2
To change careers ☐ 3
For personal satisfaction ☐ 4
To escape boredom ☐ 5
To make new friends ☐ 6
To develop new skills ☐ 7
Health problems indicated that new training was required ☐ 8
Other (please specify) ☐ 9
____

(b) Draw a circle around the box above which indicates the item which you consider to be the major reason you returned to school.

33. (a) Which, if any, of the following difficulties have you encountered since returning to school? Indicate as many as apply.

School workload ☐ 01
Lack of money ☐ 02
School-home conflicts ☐ 03
School-job conflicts ☐ 04
Child-care problems ☐ 05
Fatigue ☐ 06
Acquiring good study habits ☐ 07
Inadequate recognition of my work experience ☐ 08
Adjusting to role of student ☐ 09
Insufficient academic counselling ☐ 10
Disappointment in instruction ☐ 11
Lack of grounding for study program ☐ 12
Lack of self-confidence ☐ 13
Relationships with younger students ☐ 14
Relationships with teachers ☐ 15
Inflexible timetable ☐ 16
Inflexible curriculum ☐ 17
Fear of inability to learn new material ☐ 18
Other (please specify) ☐ 19
____
None ☐ 20

(b) Draw a circle around the box above which indicates the greatest difficulty you have encountered since returning to school.

PART C (Continued)

34. (a) Which, if any, of the following benefits have you encountered since returning to school? Indicate as many as apply.

Obtaining new information in my field of interest ☐ 01
Meeting new people ☐ 02
Discovery of my ability to learn new material ☐ 03
Being challenged intellectually ☐ 04
Learning new skills ☐ 05
Widening my knowledge and interests ☐ 06
Obtaining the required education for employment ☐ 07
Treated with more respect by other people ☐ 08
Making new friends ☐ 09
Feel more confident about my future ☐ 10
Getting out of a routine or boring job ☐ 11
Being involved in something worthwhile for me ☐ 12
Other (please specify) ☐ 13

____

None ☐ 14

(b) Draw a circle around the box above which indicates the greatest benefit you have encountered since returning to school.

35. Do you think your adjustment to the role of student has been

More difficult than you expected ☐ 1
As expected ☐ 2
Less difficult than expected ☐ 3

INDICATE ONLY ONE ANSWER

36. Do you think the study content has been

More difficult than expected ☐ 1
As expected ☐ 2
Easier than expected ☐ 3

37. Do you think the amount of school work has been

More then expected ☐ 1
As expected ☐ 2
Less than expected ☐ 3

38. Have you found that your financial costs are

More than expected ☐ 1
As expected ☐ 2
Less than expected ☐ 3

39. Have you found the conflicting demands of your school and non-school activities to be

More difficult than expected ☐ 1
As expected ☐ 2
Less than expected ☐ 3

PART C (Continued)

40. (a) What do you think should be altered to make it easier for mature students to return to school as full-time students? Please indicate as many of the items as apply by placing an "X" in the appropriate box.

Provisions for childcare facilities	☐	01
Flexibility in time of classes	☐	02
Flexibility in location of classes	☐	03
Special counselling for mature students	☐	04
More financial assistance for mature students	☐	05
More flexibility in criteria for funding assistance	☐	06
More flexibility in criteria for admission	☐	07
More information about available courses and programs	☐	08
Better access to resources (libraries, counsellors, etc.)	☐	09
Changed attitudes of teachers to mature students	☐	10
Changed attitudes of society to mature students	☐	11
More opportunities to get to know other mature students within the Institute	☐	12
Other (please specify) ______________________	☐	13

(b) Draw a circle around the box above which indicates what you feel to be the area most in need of change.

41. Sex: Male ☐ 1 Female ☐ 2

42. Year of Birth: 19____

43. Marital Status:

Single	☐	1	Widowed	☐	4
Married	☐	2	Divorced	☐	5
Common Law	☐	3	Separated	☐	6

44. Please use the remaining space to make any further comments you wish regarding your experience as a full-time mature student at the Institute. (Use extra sheet of paper if required.)

THANK YOU FOR COMPLETING THIS QUESTIONNAIRE. YOUR COMMENTS WILL HELP US TO UNDERSTAND THE SITUATION OF THE MATURE STUDENT IN SASKATCHEWAN INSTITUTES. THIS UNDERSTANDING WILL ASSIST IN FUTURE CONSIDERATION OF THE NEEDS OF THIS IMPORTANT PART OF THE STUDENT POPULATION. THANK YOU FOR ASSISTING US IN THIS ENDEAVOUR. THE RESULTS OF THIS RESEARCH WILL BE AVAILABLE AT EACH INSTITUTE BY THE AUTUMN OF 1979.

Government of
Saskatchewan

Memorandum

From R. L. Meyer, Principal,
Wascana Institute of Applied Arts and Sciences.

Date

Phone

To

Your File

Re Research Study of Institute Mature Students

Our File

This memo is to inform you that a research project will soon be conducted within the three Saskatchewan Institutes which will be gathering data on mature full-time students who are enrolled in one or two-year programs. (For the purpose of the research, a "one-year program" is defined as any program of 35 weeks or longer; and a "mature student" is defined as one 25 years of age or older.)

A search of computerized SIS data indicates that your program has one or more mature students enrolled. The list of your mature students is attached to this memo. Each student will receive a letter requesting that he/she complete a structured questionnaire which will take about 15-20 minutes. The questionnaire will be administered at Wascana Institute sometime in January. Information regarding the room location and date will be sent to you and the students when it is finalized.

The study will be conducted by Lorraine Hill under the auspices of the Policy Planning and Management Information Systems Branch of the Department of Continuing Education. It is our hope that this research will give us more information regarding the background and present situation of our mature students, why they returned to school, what decision-making process was followed, and the difficulties and benefits they encounter as they reenter the educational system.

I am requesting that:

(1) you check the attached list and contact Lorraine Hill at 565-5608 if the list is incorrect or incomplete.

(2) you encourage the listed students to complete the questionnaire at the designated time and location.

Thank you for your cooperation. I hope the results of this research will allow us to continue our planning to maximize the learning experiences of our mature students.

Att.

APPENDIX D

Government of Saskatchewan

Memorandum

From Lorraine Hill, Research Study Director.

Date January 5, 1979.

Phone

To

Your File

Re Research Study on Institute Mature Students

Our File

This memo is sent to you to request your participation in a research study about to be undertaken in the three Saskatchewan Institutes. The research will be a study of the "mature" students registered as full-time students in one or two-year programs in the Institutes. The term "mature student" means any full-time student aged 25 years or over.

Information at the Department of Continuing Education indicates that you are a full-time mature student registered in a one or two-year program. I am therefore requesting your participation in this study.

This participation will involve completing a questionnaire which will take about 15-20 minutes of your time. I will be at S.T.I. on January 11th from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m with these questionnaires. Please come to Room C131 anytime during these hours to complete the questionnaire.

Your responses to the questionnaire will include some information about your background and present situation, why you returned to school, how that decision was made and the difficulties and benefits you have encountered since entering the Institute. Your responses will be confidential and at no time will they be identified by your name or by the program you are enrolled in.

Mr. Finlayson and your Program Head are aware of this study and support its purpose of better understanding the mature students in our Institutes. They will give you encouragement and opportunity to participate in the study on the day indicated.

It is our hope that this tudy will give us more information about the situation of mature students, and that this information will help us in future planning.

Your participation will be most appreciated for the present study and, more importantly, for future planning regarding mature students.

If you are unable to participate at the listed time, please inform your program head and I will arrange to send you the questionnaire.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Lorraine Hill

Government of
Saskatchewan

Memorandum

From Lorraine Hill, Research Study Director.

Date January 11, 1979.

Phone

To

Your File

Re Research Study on Institute Mature Students

Our File

This memo is sent to you to request your participation in a research study about to be undertaken in the three Saskatchewan Institutes. The research will be a study of the "mature" students registered as full-time students in one or two-year programs in the Institutes. The term "mature student" means any full-time student aged 25 years or over.

Information at the Department of Continuing Education indicates that you are a full-time mature student registered in a one or two-year program. I am therefore requesting your participation in this study.

This participation will involve completing a questionnaire which will take about 15-20 minutes of your time. You will find the questionnaire attached to this memo. Please complete it and mail it directly back to me in the enclosed envelope.

Your responses to the questionnaire will include some information about your background and present situation, why you returned to school, how that decision was made and the difficulties and benefits you have encountered since entering the Institute. Your responses will be confidential and at no time will they be identified by your name or by the program you are enrolled in.

Mr. Meyer and your Program Head are aware of this study and support its purpose of better understanding the mature students in our Institutes.

It is our hope that this study will give us more information about the situation of mature students, and that this information will help us in future planning.

Your participation will be most appreciated for the present study and, more importantly, for future planning regarding mature students.

Please take a few minutes and mail the completed questionnaire back to me as soon as possible.

Thank you for your cooperation.

APPENDIX F

Government of the Province of Saskatchewan

DEPARTMENT MEMO

From Lorraine Hill

Date January 15, 1979

To

Re Mature Student Questionnaire

As you were unable to complete the Mature Student Questionnaire today at Wascana Institute, I am sending you the questionnaire with the request that you complete it and mail it to me as soon as possible. An addressed and stamped envelope is enclosed for the purpose.

In order to look at the present situation of mature students in Saskatchewan Institutes and to plan for the future, it is important that we get information from all present mature students. We need your assistance in obtaining this information, so please complete the questionnaire and return it to me.

The coded number at the top of your questionnaire is for bookkeeping purposes only. Your responses will be strictly confidential.

Thank you for your co-operation.

Lorraine Hill

Government of
Saskatchewan

Memorandum

From Lorraine Hill, PPMIS,
Dept. of Continuing Education

Date January 30,1979

To

Re Mature Student Study.

You may recall that earlier this month you were asked to participate in a study of full-time mature students at the Saskatchewan Institutes. A questionnaire and a stamped envelope was distributed to you with the request that the questionnaire be returned to me as soon as possible.

This reminder is coming to you to ask you to complete the questionnaire and mail it to me. We are attempting to discover the present situation of all mature students in Saskatchewan Institutes, and we need input from everyone for the study to be of greatest value. It is my hope that the information obtained from the present mature students will allow us to do planning for the future that will better meet the needs of the mature students in the province.

I realize that all mature students are pressed for time to complete all the tasks presented to them, but I sincerely hope that you will take the few minutes required from your other commitments to complete the questionnaire. If you did not receive the questionnaire or have misplaced it, please phone me in Regina at 565-5922 (collect) and I will mail you a questionnaire immediately.

We will begin tabulation of the responses to the questionnaire within the next two weeks, therefore I ask you to get your "two cents worth" in right away. Your comments are needed to make the study complete and to help in the planning for the future.

Thank you for your cooperation.

Lorraine Hill

APPENDIX H

ONE AND TWO-YEAR PROGRAMS INCLUDED IN THE STUDY
(CERTIFICATE AND DIPLOMA)

Applied Science and Engineering Technology

Agricultural Parts Marketing (1)[a]
Architectural Engineering (2)[b]
Biological Sciences (2)
Chemical Technician (1)
Civil Engineering (2)
Electrical Engineering (2)
Electronics Engineering (2)
Engineering Drafting (2)
Industrial Instrumentation (1)
Mechanical Engineering (2)
Renewable Resources (2)
Surveying Technology (2)
Water Sciences (2)

Health Sciences

Certified Combined Technician (1)
Dental Assistant (1)
Dental Nursing (2)
Diploma Nursing (2)
Health Record Technology (2)
Medical Laboratory Technology (1)
Nursing Assistant (1)
Psychiatric Nursing (2)

Service Occupations

Food Service Technology (2)
Hotel Administration (2)
Library Technicial (1)
Personal Development Worker (1)
Recreation Technology (2)
Social Service Worker (1)

Administration and Business

Accountancy (2)
Administration (2)
Data Processing (2)
Office Education (1)
Retailing (2)

Trades and Pre-Employment Programs

Barbering-Hairstyling (1)
Commercial Cooking (1)
Cosmetology (1)
Heavy Duty Repair (1)
Mechanics - Farm (2)
Mechanics - Industrial (1)
Power Engineering (1)
Refrigeration & Air Conditioning (1)
T.V.-Radio Service (1)

[a] -programs of 35 weeks or more in one academic year are defined as one-year programs for the purpose of this study,

[b] -programs of 35 weeks or more in each of two academic years are defined as two-year programs for the purpose of this study.

APPENDIX I

A Comparison of Females' Reasons for Intervals out of School in the Present Study With Steele's (1968) Female Respondents

Reasons given	Steele (1968)[*]	Present study[**]
Marriage	25%	31%
Had to go to work	18%	not included
Completed school desired at the time	not included	18%
Could not afford to continue	13%	12%
Wanted to go to work	10%	19%
No goal to which school contributed	6%	5%
Disliked school	1%	4%
Other	4%	7%

[*] reasons for not continuing education after high school.

[**] reasons for interval(s) out of school.